



This Month:

Views & View Management (part 3)

Welcome to **INFOCUS**, C3 Consulting Solution's Monthly Newsletter. This is our third instalment looking at Views and View Management. In this edition, we'll take an in-depth look into View Naming.

As with any system of organisation, consistency is paramount. Whatever rules apply, apply consistently. The naming of views is no exception.

There are no official standards that address the issue of view naming. Perhaps this is because it's not been such an issue for us until dealing with BIM software, or more precisely, a single file model concept that contains each of our views. Or, perhaps it's just a result of every project being different.

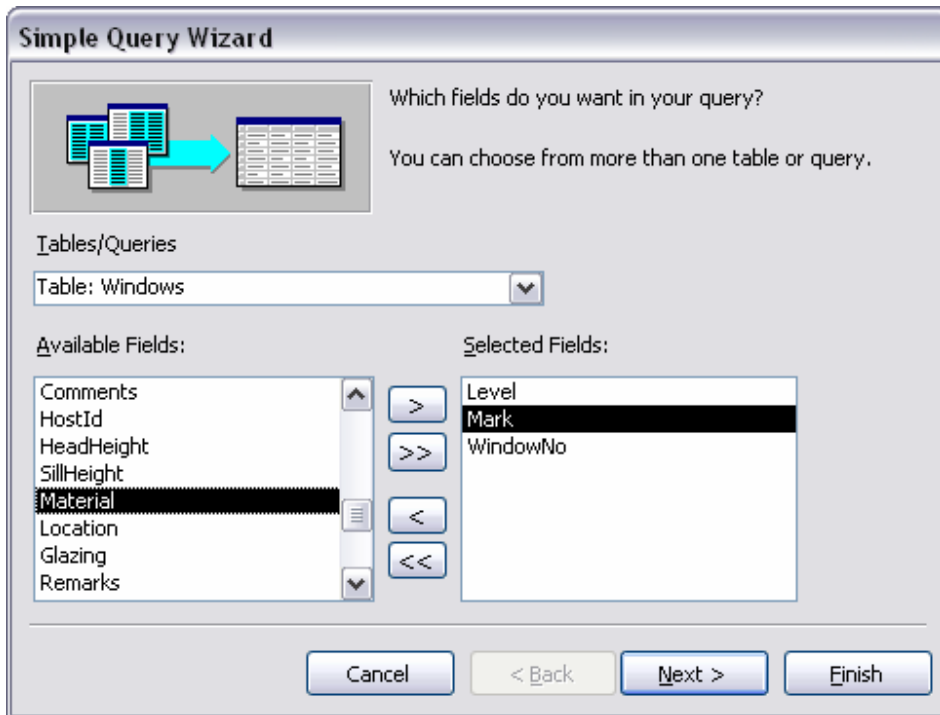
Are there any patterns in the way we name our views that we can exploit? Can we be systematic about it? What do we want from a naming system? What do we hope to achieve?

These are questions that this paper will seek to address. It may be that you have other things that you'd like to achieve with your view naming, and if those things aren't covered here, do feel free to [send in](#) your ideas or questions.

At its heart, Revit® in any of its three forms is a database, and anyone with any familiarity with databases is likely to know that you can seek information from a database by way of a 'query'. This is a way to ask a question of our project databases.

For instance, when we want to find a particular view, we are really asking a question of the database – such as "Show me a view that satisfies my criteria. My criteria is...". The criteria we specify might be some properties of a view, such as a name.

As an example of this, the image below is a screen grab from Microsoft Access, looking at an exported ODBC database from a Revit® model. For anyone who is familiar with the creation of Revit® schedules – does the image resemble anything familiar?



To better understand how to proceed down this path, ask yourself some questions:

- What other information would it be useful to see right before us at any given time?
- What do we want to know about our views at any given moment?

Customising the project browser to show us views in a particular way is just another query. We established in last month's edition of INFOCUS that we can sort our views according to parameter values. We can apply filters to eliminate certain views from showing at all – for example "Show all views **NOT** on sheets".

If you've played around with these sorts of 'queries', you'll also notice that the number of parameters you can sort your views (or sheets) by is limited. What can you do if you need more than what Revit® allows?

Generally, the larger the project, the greater the number of views you will have to manage. You may find the need for more 'heads-up' information to be in front of you. Two methods of having this information permanently in front of you (regardless of how you use the project browser) follow.

The first is a common practice employed on small to medium size projects. The query (if expressed as a question) would be something like "Show me the views based on their **purpose**".

To answer this – what is the purpose of the view? Possible answers might be "to go on a sheet" or "to show this part of the model", or "to show this data in a schedule format". Perhaps it is all of the above.

A simple system is to differentiate those views that are intended for publishing and those that are not. If this is the only way you wish to distinguish your views, you could capitalise the views that ARE intended for publishing, and keep those that aren't labelled in lower case. This naming method is simple and clear. That's largely what makes it effective.

Suppose you want more. Suppose you want to be able to easily navigate between your views no matter how the project browser is organised.

We could form the view's name in parts. The following system describes the view firstly by the view's **purpose**. Such purposes include (but may not be limited to):

View Purpose	Sample Prefix
Views are to be printed	PRN
Views are for modelling purposes only – not to be printed	MOD
Views are for coordination or inspection purposes	INS

You can alter the prefixes to suit your preferences or additional view purposes. What is important is that they are used consistently.

Next, we might wish to determine from the name what the **type** of view is. A list of view types might include:

View Category Description	Sample Prefix
Site Analysis	SAN
Site Plan	SPL
Floor Plan	FPL
Building Elevation	BEL
Wall Section	WSE

And so on...

You can determine whether you use numeric or alphabetic codes (or even a combination of both), however alphabetic codes are usually more intuitive.

After establishing the above prefixes, you could describe the actual view with whatever is appropriate. While this is ultimately subjective, it usually necessitates something descriptive yet clear. This may depend on the project, and is a great item to be discussed at team meetings, or better yet, at project planning meetings.

An example view name using the above system might be:

PRN – FPL – 02 Second Floor Plan

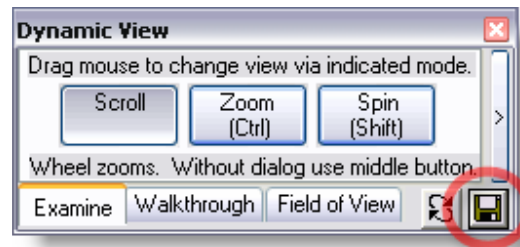
The numerical prefix to the View Description above allows the levels to be sorted by number, rather than by alphabetic order. The precise syntax of dashes and/or spaces should also be determined so as to keep the names as consistent as possible.

Suffixes may prove useful too – for example, some views are (by the intent that belies their existence) exclusive to a particular user. These could be 3D views, used for inspecting work that relates to a user's particular scope at any given time. If your project uses worksharing, remember that a view is a workset and can only be edited (or 'borrowed out') by a single user. By duplicating the view, and applying a systematic suffix, users can regain some of the control they would not have had otherwise.

An example of such a prefix applied may be '3D North East Bird's Eye – **JohnC**'. Alternately, a different suffix could be used to indicate the importance of preserving the view – '**DNC**', for example, could denote 'Do Not Change' – thus warning other users as to the view's importance within the set.

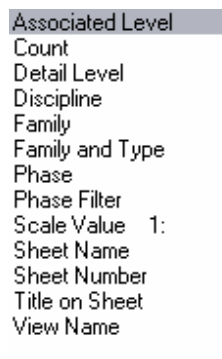
TIP: For 3D views, you can save the orientation of a view by clicking on the Save button in the Dynamically Modify View dialog. You can revert to saved orientation by clicking on the button next to it.

This is not a fool-proof way to protect views. A more robust methodology could (if the project has worksharing enabled) is to check out the appropriate view workset under the name of a 'phantom' user. This is the same technique used by many to protect Shared Levels and Grids.



Using View Lists

As for management of views, the creation of a view list can be extremely useful. You won't find it on the View Tab of the Design Bar, but you will find it under the View pull-down menu (View|New|View List).



Any of the parameters (shown left) associated with Views can be scheduled. If you can think of any others you might require, these can be added too (as project parameters). The three parameters discussed in last month's edition of INFOCUS would be useful additions. By using scheduling techniques, you can run more advanced queries, answered by the view list.

Ideas or suggestions for other 'queries' include:

- "Show me the views that are required for sheets in order from the least complete to the most complete".
- "Show me all the views of the project sorted by their respective identifiable areas (or zones)"

Or, perhaps more complex ones:

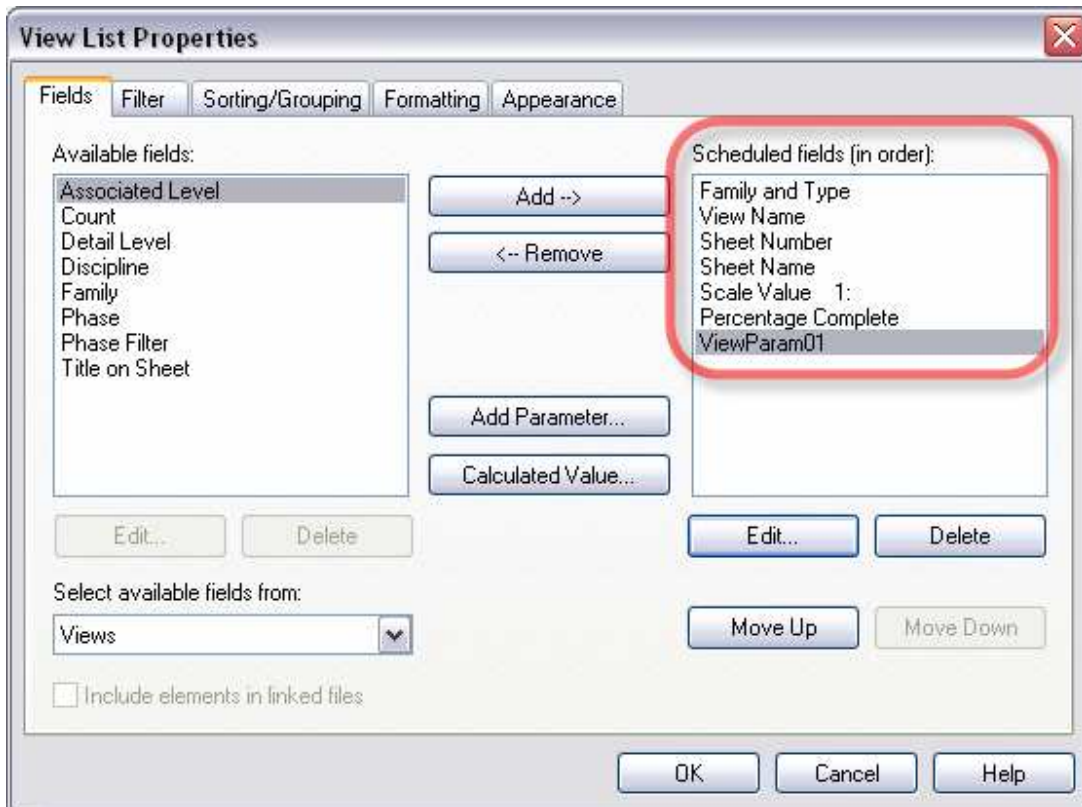
- "Show me all the views that are intended to be printed, grouped by View category, with their associated sheet numbers and names, showing percentage complete in ascending order, and listing their scales..."

To which the end result might look something like this:

View List				
View Name	Sheet No	Sheet Name	Scale Value 1:	% Complete
D1 Floor Plans				
SITE	A101	TITLE SHEET AND SITE PLAN	100	35
GROUND FLOOR	A102	GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR PLANS	100	70
FIRST FLOOR	A102	GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR PLANS	100	75
D2 Elevations				
NORTH	A103	ELEVATIONS	100	55
EAST	A103	ELEVATIONS	100	75
SOUTH	A103	ELEVATIONS	100	80
WEST	A103	ELEVATIONS	100	90
D3 RCP				
FIRST FLOOR RCP	A105	GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR RCPs	100	35
GROUND FLOOR RCP	A105	GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR RCPs	100	45
D4 Sections				
SECTION 1	A104	SECTIONS	100	35
SECTION 2	A104	SECTIONS	100	55
D5 Internal Elevations				
ELEVATION 1 - c	A106	INTERNAL ELEVATIONS	50	15
ELEVATION 1 - b	A106	INTERNAL ELEVATIONS	50	20
ELEVATION 1 - a	A106	INTERNAL ELEVATIONS	50	35
ELEVATION 1 - d	A106	INTERNAL ELEVATIONS	50	60
D6 Construction Details				
WALL SECTION 1	A107	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS	20	55
WALL SECTION 2	A107	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS	20	55

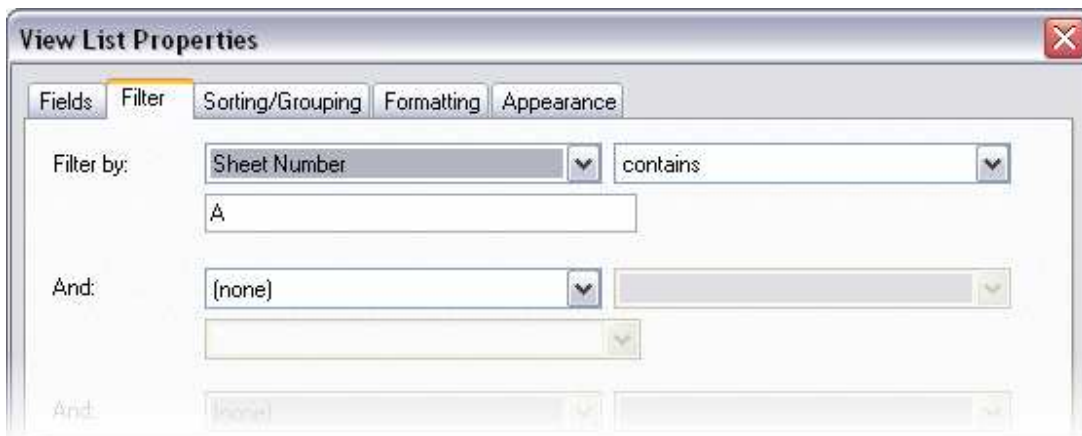
The schedule can be used to quickly identify which views are the least complete, and therefore potentially the most in need of attention. Resources can then be assigned to the tasks required, in order to better meet the project's needs.

TIP: You could add another parameter such as 'View Required for Next Issue' (as a YES/NO parameter'. You could filter by this as well, so only the views required for your next issue are the subject of the scrutiny.

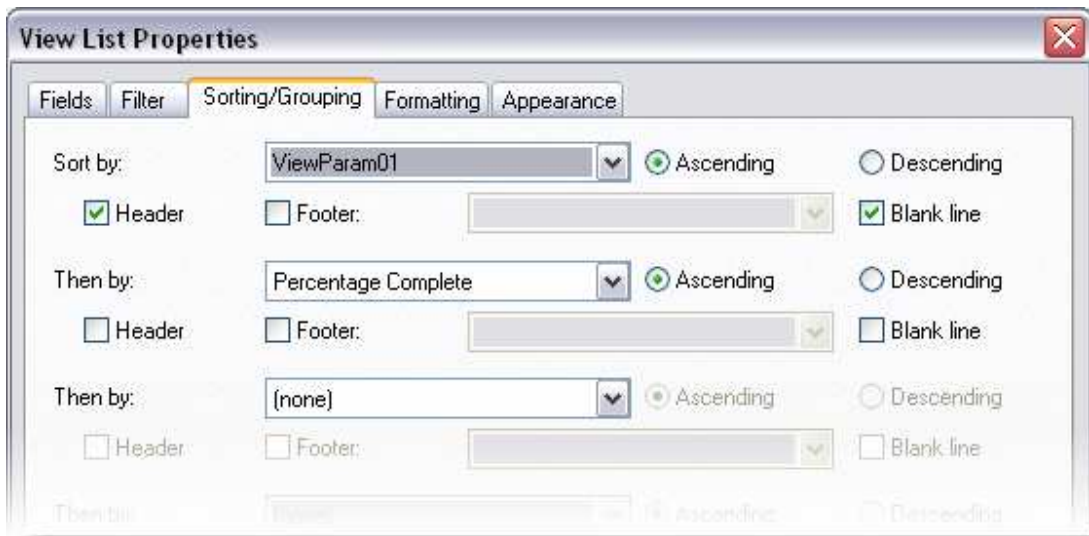


In the above example, the fields used were as shown below. The highlighted parameter is a custom parameter added to the project (this can be done directly via 'Add Parameter', though for re-use and consistency, it is better practice to add a parameter after it has first been created in a shared parameters file – refer last month's INFOCUS newsletter for more information).

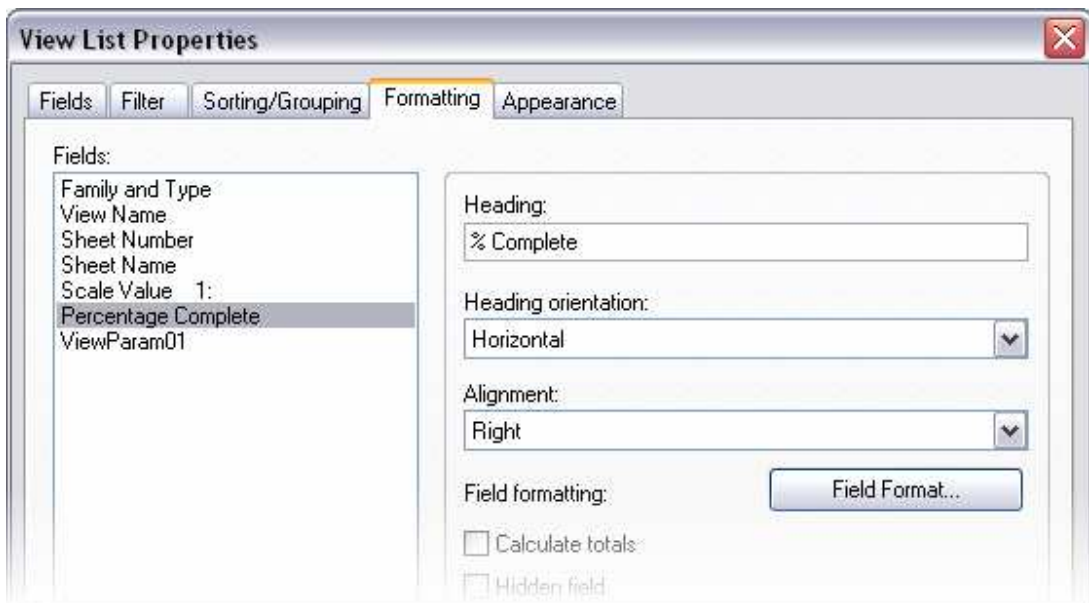
A filter has been applied to allow only those views with their corresponding sheet number containing the letter 'A'. Based on the pattern employed, this will exclude all irrelevant views (that are not already on sheets).



The views are grouped by a custom parameter set as a header.



The parameters used can be formatted as desired.



The appearance tab is not relevant if the schedule will not be placed on any sheets.

It does not have to be added to a sheet – it is merely a tool that may allow better management of your views. In addition to views, you may find this same technique useful in managing your sheets.

There are many other ways you could organise and manage your views (and sheets) using your project browser, view lists, drawing lists etc. Hopefully these last few editions of INFOCUS have provided you with some ideas. If you have others of your own you'd like to share, please feel free to [send them in](#). You will receive full acknowledgement for your suggestions.

Stay tuned for the next edition of INFOCUS, in which we will take a look at the new features of Revit® Architecture 2009.

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