Introducing cf_sebTable

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Over the years, I have had to create countless administrative data tables. Most of them are similar to one another. A few years ago, I saw that my friend, **Tim Jackson**, had created a custom tag to manage this. I thought the idea was brilliant, but I felt that the implementation could be improved.

The cf_sebTable has the primary purpose of making it easy to create these common tables. In its early incarnation, it looked at database tables directly. Now it pulls data either from a query or from a CFC method.

To display a table of employees from a "qEmployees" query, I could use the following code:

```
<cf_sebTable
   query="qEmployees"
   pkfield="EmployeeID"
   label="Employee"
   editlink="employee-edit.cfm?id=">
   <cf_sebColumn dbfield="EmployeeName" label="Name">
   <cf_sebColumn dbfield="HireDate" label="Hired" type="date">
</cf_sebTable>
```

This would produce output something like the following (examples are without skins or styling - see **demonstration site** for skinning examples):

(1 - 50) of 50 records

Employee Manager [   ]

, Quis Nostrud Ex	9/07/2007
Adipiscing	8/20/2007
Cing Elit, Se	7/13/2009
Cumsan Et Ius	11/04/2008
Diam Nonummy Nibh	8/26/2008
Dolore Magna Aliqu	2/17/2009
Em Ipsum Dolor	7/17/2008
Feugiat Nulla Facil	2/09/2009
I Enim Ad Minim Ve	7/24/2008
Ibh Euismod	11/14/2007
Iquam Erat Volut	2/18/2009
Iriure Dolor I	4/12/2008

The "Name" and "Hired" links at the top allow the user to sort the rows by those fields (clicking a second time reverses the sort). Most skins include an indicator of what sort is in effect.

Note the formatting of the edit link: "employee-edit.cfm?id=". The cf_sebTable doesn't know anything about other pages, but it does know the primary key field (because that is a required attribute). It appends the value of the primary key field to the link for each row. So, if the EmployeeID for a record is "3", then the link would be "employee-edit.cfm?id=3".

If I wanted to change the date formatting, I could apply a mask:

```
<cf_sebTable
    query="qEmployees"
    pkfield="EmployeeID"
    label="Employee"
    editlink="employee-edit.cfm?id=">
    <cf_sebColumn dbfield="EmployeeName" label="Name">
    <cf_sebColumn dbfield="HireDate" label="Hired" type="date" mask="mmmm, yyyy">
</cf_sebTable>
```

This would change the output:

(1 - 50) of 50 records

Employee Manager [Add New Employee]

Name	Hired	
Lore Te Feugait	July, 2009	edit
Blandit Praesent	July, 2009	edit
M Nonummy N	July, 2009	edit
Ad Minim	July, 2009	edit
It Praesent	May, 2009	edit
Do Consequat. Du	March, 2009	edit
Im Ad Minim Veni	March, 2009	edit
Onummy Nibh Euismod	March, 2009	edit
Nsectetuer Adi	February, 2009	edit
Re Te Feugai	February, 2009	edit
Os Et Accumsan Et Iu	February, 2009	edit
Wisi Enim Ad Minim	January, 2009	edit

The sorting, however, would not be effected as it uses the data for sorting, not the formatted output.

The cf_sebTable tag does much more than this, but that will have to wait for another day.

Other topics for the future include:

- Getting data from a CFC
- Saving and Deleting data
- Basic column types
- Custom column types

The **sebtags custom tag set** is open source and free for any use.