



Softshare DELTA[®]

E-commerce is continuing to gain popularity throughout the business community. This trend is well founded considering the incredible benefits that e-commerce provides: lower costs, fewer rekeying errors, and instantaneous document delivery. These benefits, however, are only fully realized when you are able to integrate your electronic documents with other internal business systems.

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The open architecture of Softshare Delta lets you create customized integration solutions that fit the requirements of your business. Whether you want to translate EDI purchase orders into an internal accounting system, convert accounts receivable files into XML invoices, or load your inventory information into an online Web catalog, Softshare Delta has all the tools you need to seamlessly integrate your business operations.

Softshare Delta is a *universal* data translator. Delta not only supports EDI standards, but a variety of other data formats as well, including data (flat) files, databases (via OLE DB), and XML. Delta also supports mapping to free-form text document formats, such as HTML, to aid in Web integration. Delta treats each data type individually, leveraging the unique power of each format. No application should be an island--with Softshare Delta, you can integrate your disparate data sources into one powerful electronic commerce system.

Softshare Delta. Integrate your enterprise.

Six Easy Steps

Softshare Delta divides the translation process into six easy steps:

1	Designing your source business object model
2	Designing your target business object model
3	Creating your data translation map
4	Validating your data translation map
5	Testing your data translation map
6	Installing your map for automatic execution via Softshare ECS or Softshare Vista

Steps 1 and 2: Designing Your Business Object Models

What is a Business Object Model?

Before you can map between two data formats, you must first model those formats. Your source model represents the data before it is mapped. Your target model represents the data after it is mapped. For example, if you want to integrate incoming EDI purchase orders into your accounting database, the EDI purchase order would be your source business object model and your accounting database would be your target business object model.

Limitless Flexibility

You can design your business object models yourself or you can import a sample file and let Softshare Delta design them for you. Either way, Delta's helpful Merlin screens efficiently guide you through the process, prompting you for important information about your model.

Delta Standard vs. Delta Enterprise

Softshare offers two versions of Softshare Delta: Delta Standard and Delta Enterprise. Delta Standard supports the two most common business data formats: EDI and data file. Delta Enterprise provides another layer of sophistication by supporting three additional model formats: database (using OLE DB or ODBC), XML, and text document. And, because Delta fully supports the Microsoft OLE DB standard for database access, you are able to avoid intermediary data files and integrate directly with your internal applications.

Data Format	Delta Standard	Delta Enterprise
EDI	X	X
Data File	X	X
Database		X
XML		X
Text Document		X

EDI Models

Softshare Delta always ships with the final release of the ANSI X12 and UN/EDIFACT standards and offers full support for all X12 dictionaries and all recent EDIFACT directories. There are four easy ways to model your EDI documents:

- Using sample EDI documents
- Using Standard Exchange Format (SEF) files
- Using Guideline XML (gXML) files
- Using EDI standards

When you import a sample EDI document, Delta quickly creates a baseline model reflecting all the segments and elements found in your sample. This baseline model can then be modified and updated with additional segments, elements, and code values as needed. Alternatively, if your trading partner makes their ICs (implementation conventions) available in an electronic SEF or Guideline XML (gXML) file format, Softshare Delta can use this information to create a complete EDI model in a matter of seconds, no adjustments needed.

When you use Softshare Delta, you never need to create an EDI model from scratch. At a minimum, Softshare Delta provides you with a baseline EDI model that contains the mandatory segments and elements required by the document or message type you are modeling.

If your ICs or those of your trading partners are updated to reflect a new EDI version, Delta can automatically convert your models to the new version. Called Map Migration, this feature saves you the time and trouble of recreating your EDI models and the maps associated with them.

Data File Models

Softshare Delta supports both fixed-width and character-delimited file formats, including comma-separated values (CSV) and tab-delimited files. To help you represent the header/detail relationship often found between data files or data file records, one data file model can consist of multiple, linked data files or multiple record types.

EDI Model Merlin

What will your EDI model be based upon?

Sample - An actual EDI document sent by my trading partner.
EDI File: C:\My Documents\SampleEDI\850.edi

SEF - A Standard Exchange Format (SEF) file.
SEF File:

gXML - A Guideline XML (gXML) file.
gXML File:

Generic - A generic transaction as specified by an EDI standard.

< Back Finish Cancel Help

- ▲ Softshare Delta's Merlin screens walk you through the model creation process. These "smart" screens ask all the right questions, ensuring that your model meets your business needs perfectly.

Data File Linkage

You have placed a data file model within another one. Most typically the second file contains records which are detail records of the first. Softshare Delta needs to know how the data of these two files are linked.

Record Inclusion

Include ALL records in the second file.

Include records where the PONumber field matches the FlatPO.Header.PONumber field in the primary file.

Include records for which the following conditional is true:
PONumber=FlatPO.Header.PONumber

OK Cancel

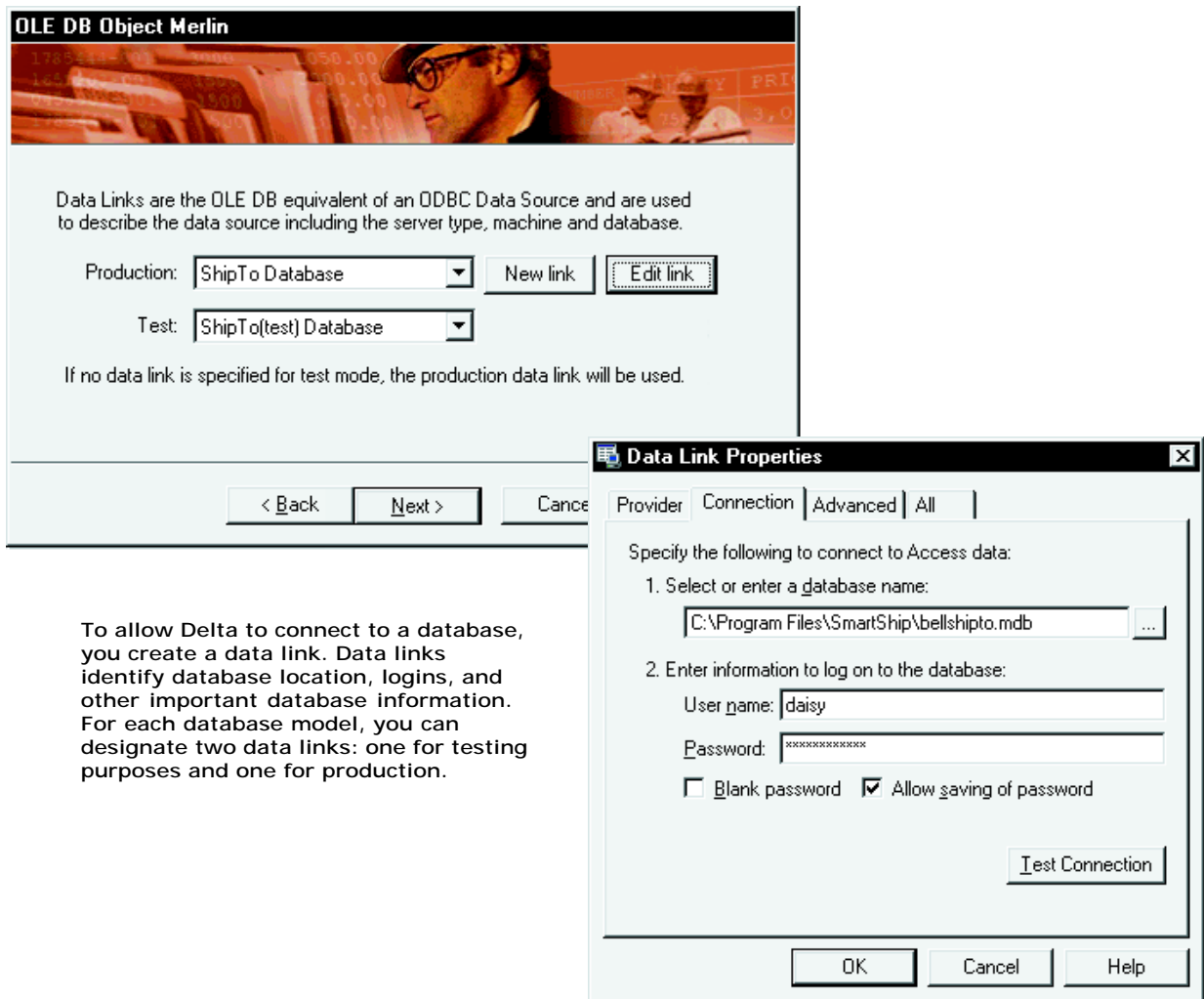
- ▲ Using Delta, you can easily establish a link between header and detail data files by identifying matching fields or writing a conditional statement.

OLE DB Models

Softshare Delta lets you integrate with your internal applications using Microsoft's OLE DB standard for universal data access. Since OLE DB is backward compatible with the ODBC standard, Softshare Delta can access hundreds of relational database systems, including SQL Server, Oracle, IBM's DB2, and Informix, as well as file-based databases such as Microsoft Access, dBASE, and FoxPro.

Softshare Delta makes working with databases easy. You simply select a database and table and Delta instantly produces a complete database model. In addition, you can model tables that do not reside in the same database, or even on the same machine. Affording more power, Softshare Delta lets you write your own structured query language (SQL) statements for running complicated queries or calling stored procedures.

Welcome to the world of universal data access!



The image shows two overlapping dialog boxes from the Softshare Delta software. The top dialog box is titled "OLE DB Object Merlin" and contains a header image of a man in a hard hat. Below the image, it explains that Data Links are the OLE DB equivalent of an ODBC Data Source and are used to describe the data source including the server type, machine and database. It features two dropdown menus: "Production:" with "ShipTo Database" selected and "Test:" with "ShipTo(test) Database" selected. There are "New link" and "Edit link" buttons. At the bottom, it says "If no data link is specified for test mode, the production data link will be used." and has "< Back", "Next >", and "Cancel" buttons.

The bottom dialog box is titled "Data Link Properties" and has tabs for "Provider", "Connection", "Advanced", and "All". It instructs the user to "Specify the following to connect to Access data:" and lists two steps: "1. Select or enter a database name:" with a text box containing "C:\Program Files\SmartShip\bellshipto.mdb" and a browse button "..."; and "2. Enter information to log on to the database:" with "User name:" set to "daisy" and "Password:" set to "*****". There are checkboxes for "Blank password" (unchecked) and "Allow saving of password" (checked). A "Test Connection" button is at the bottom right. "OK", "Cancel", and "Help" buttons are at the very bottom.

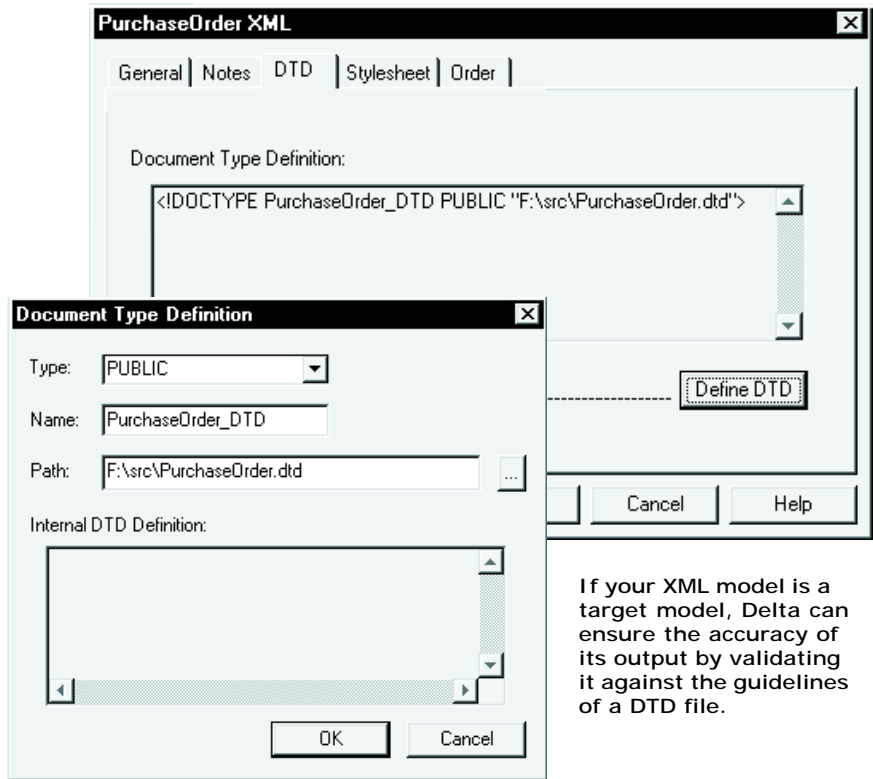
To allow Delta to connect to a database, you create a data link. Data links identify database location, logins, and other important database information. For each database model, you can designate two data links: one for testing purposes and one for production.

Softshare Delta lets you design any integration solution.

XML Models

XML (Extensible Markup Language) is quickly becoming a popular data format. Many businesses use XML as an end format for data entered in storefront applications, and as an intermediary format between business applications. Softshare Delta was the first data mapping application to explicitly support XML as a native data format. It was also the first data translator to support the Microsoft BizTalk® Framework, a technology that allows businesses to exchange standardized XML documents.

When creating an XML model, you can choose to base your XML models on sample XML documents, BizTalk schemas, or DTDs (document type definitions). Or, you can create an XML model from scratch. The Delta XML modeler lets you manage all XML tag elements, attributes, CDATA elements, and PCDATA elements.



If your XML model is a target model, Delta can ensure the accuracy of its output by validating it against the guidelines of a DTD file.

Delta's HTML-formatted models are ideal for producing EDI ICs. ▼

850 Purchase Order

Dictionary: 4010

Header

Usage	Pos. No.	Seq. ID	Name	Max. Use
Mandatory	10	BEG	Beginning Segment for Purchase Order	1
Optional	30	REF	Reference Identification	>1
Optional	40	PER	Administrative Communications Contact	>1
Optional	160	DTM	Date/Time Reference	>1

Detail

Usage	Pos. No.	Seq. ID	Name	Max. Use
LOOP ID - PO1				
Optional	760	PO1	Baseline Item Data	

Summary

Usage	Pos. No.	Seq. ID	Name	Max. Use
LOOP ID - CTT				
Optional	1930	CTT	Transaction Totals	>1

SEGMENT: BEG - Beginning Segment for Purchase Order

Loop: 850.BEG
Usage: Mandatory

Data Element Summary

Usage	Ref. Des.	Name	Attributes
Mandatory	BEG01	353 - Transaction Set Purpose Code	ID 2/2
		00 Original	
		01 Cancellation	
Mandatory	BEG02	92 - Purchase Order Type Code	ID 2/2

Text Document Models

For use as a target model only, the text document model lets you translate any of the previously mentioned model formats into a text file. You can use the text document model to create faxes, e-mails, letters, or even HTML-formatted Web pages.

Printing Your Models in HTML Format

Designed with Internet commerce in mind, Delta exports your maps and models in HTML format. This capability aids in documentation and publication of ICs. If you would like to share the ICs of your models with your trading partners, you can easily post HTML-formatted models to the World Wide Web or e-mail them over the Internet.

Step 3: Creating Your Data Translation Map

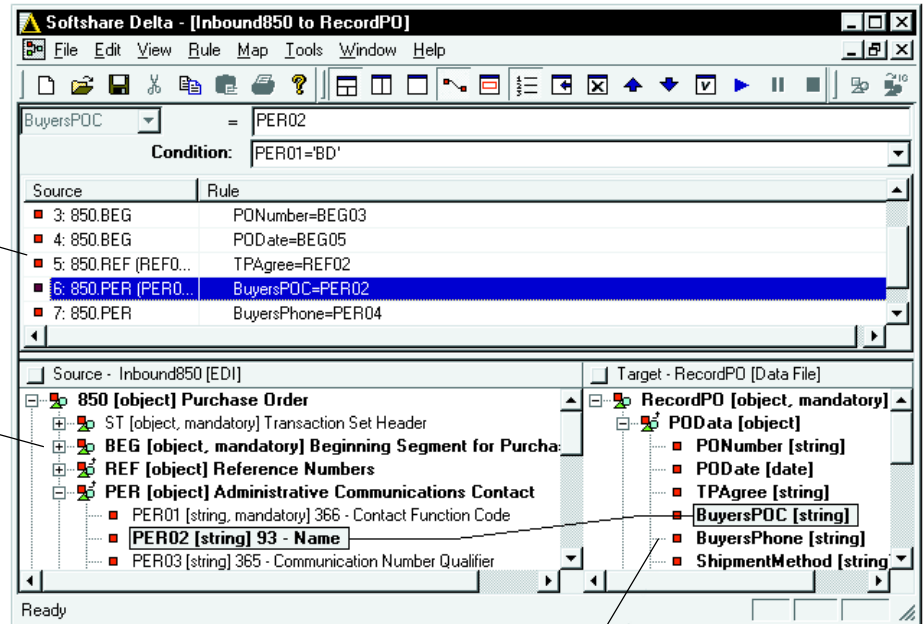
What is a Data Translation Map?

Once your business object models are defined, the next step is to identify how the target model will use the information from the source model. This is done by writing rules that link the source model's data elements to their proper positions in the target model. The process of writing these rules is called mapping and the set of rules that results is called a data translation map.

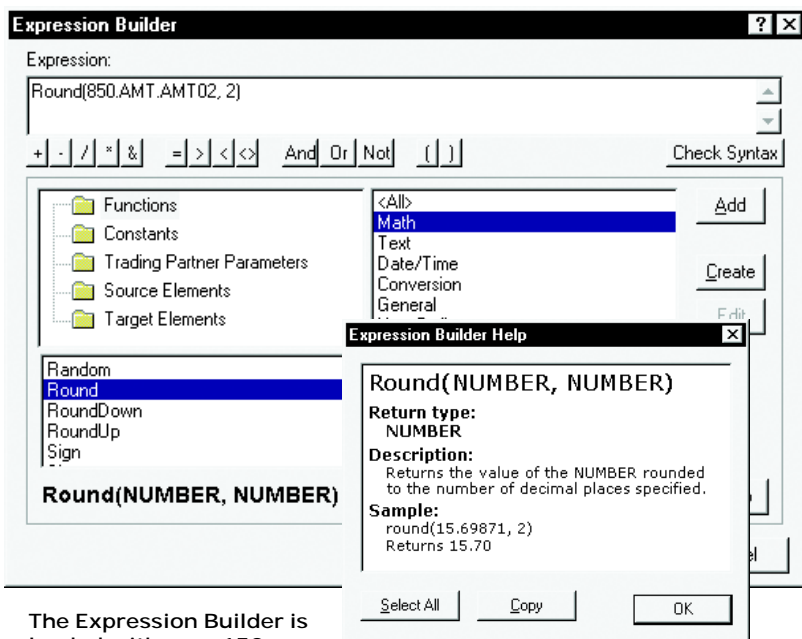
Softshare Delta is a true universal data mapper, supporting any-to-any maps. The advantages of any-to-any mapping are twofold: not only are you able to integrate all incoming and outgoing electronic documents with your internal applications, but you are also able to integrate *between* your internal applications (regardless of data format), allowing for total enterprise integration.

Source- and Target-Driven Mapping

Unlike other mapping applications, Softshare Delta supports both source- and target-driven mapping. The ability to perform rules based upon the order of your source or target data is invaluable when you are dealing with disparate source and target data formats whose layouts cannot otherwise be reconciled.



▲ To map an element from your source model to your target model, simply drag it to the target model. The resulting rule appears in the rule pane.



The Expression Builder is loaded with over 150 functions for you to use in your map rules. And, if the function you're looking for isn't here, you can create your own!

Built-in Intelligence

Mapping is not always as straightforward as linking one data element to another. Often, your target data format will require data that is not present in your source data. Or, you may need to manipulate your source data before your target data format will accept it. For example, your accounting package may require a product's catalog number in order to generate an invoice, while the purchase orders you receive from your trading partner only identify your products by name.

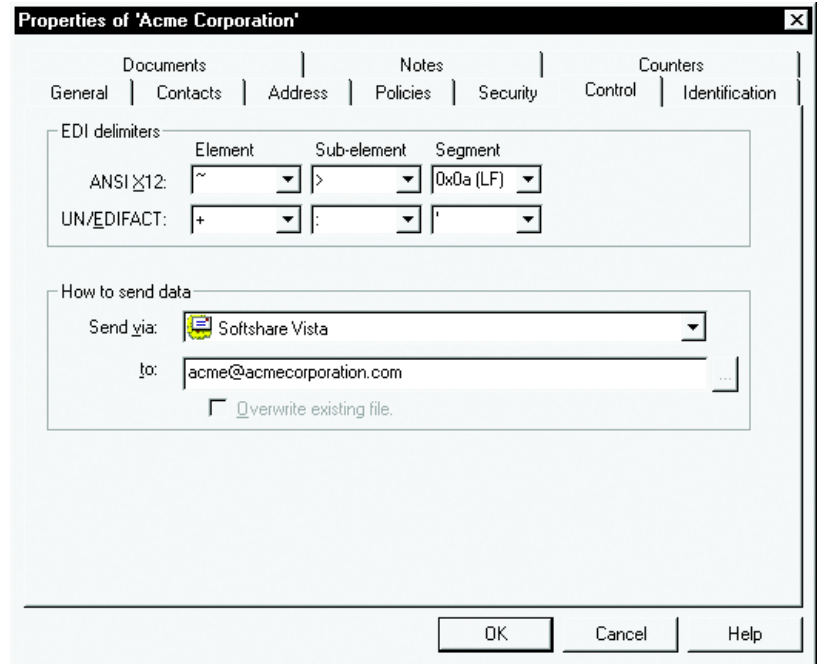
For this scenario and countless others like it, Softshare Delta offers built-in intelligence. You can use Delta's Expression Builder to incorporate functions, conditions, variables, and constants into your mapping rules. Or, you can perform a lookup that retrieves the needed information from an alternate data source.

Trading Partner Manager

Using Softshare's Trading Partner Manager (TPM), an application shipped with Delta, you can store a wide variety of trading partner information including a trading partner's mailing address, vendor or accounting ID, and production status. If your trading partner is an EDI trading partner, TPM offers even more functionality by maintaining EDI-related information such as qualifiers; ISA and GS identifiers; element, sub-element, and segment delimiters; control number sequences; and a list of the EDI document types you and your trading partner exchange.

Softshare Delta works closely with TPM to provide a powerfully integrated environment. When executing maps, Delta uses the trading partner information stored in TPM to automatically address your outgoing EDI, XML, and text document data, allocate control numbers, and set your partner's desired delimiters.

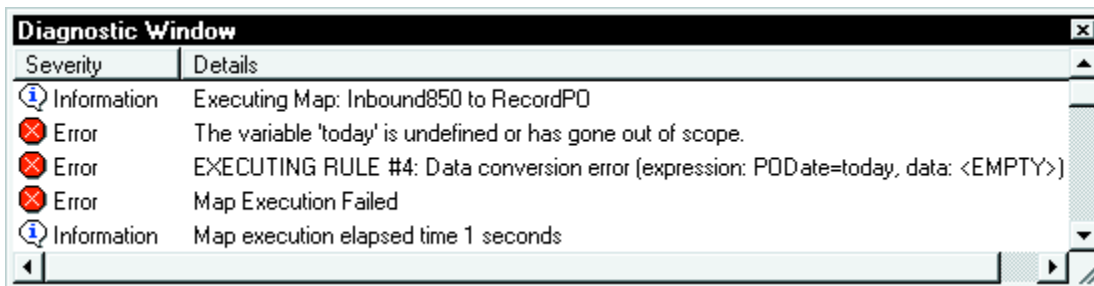
During map creation, Delta gives you full access to the data in TPM so that you can populate outgoing documents with the proper names, addresses, and contact information for your trading partners. And, based on the status of each trading partner, Delta will automatically switch between the test and production identifiers used for interchange and group addressing.



- ▲ For seamless delivery of translated data, Delta can integrate with either of Softshare's communication applications--Softshare Vista or Softshare ECS.

Steps 4 and 5: Validating and Testing Your Map

Softshare Delta's advanced map validation and testing features help ensure that your map is accurate *before* you place it into production. The Map Validator checks the syntax of your map rules, looking for invalid expressions and unmapped mandatory elements. The Map Tester performs a test run of your map, giving you a preview of its output and alerting you to any mapping errors.



- ◀ Map validating and testing are exact sciences with Softshare Delta. Descriptive error messages point you directly to the offending rule.



Step 6: Installing Your Map

When your map is ready for production, the final step is installation. Once installed, your map is available for scheduling via Softshare Vista Professional or Softshare's electronic commerce server application, Softshare ECS. Vista Professional and ECS work closely with Delta, passing data to and from Delta and scheduling the execution of Delta's maps. In addition, both Vista Professional and ECS support secure communications between you and your trading partners using the S/MIME security standard.

Softshare Delta System Requirements

Component	Minimum Requirement
Computer	Pentium PC, 233 MHz or higher processor (700 MHz recommended)
Memory	64 MB of RAM (256 MB recommended)
Hard Disk Space	50 MB available disk space
Monitor	VGA monitor with a 256-color display
Operating System	Windows® 98, Windows NT® 4.0, or Windows 2000

If you have Microsoft Visual SourceSafe installed on the development workstation, you can incorporate it into Delta's operations. Delta takes advantage of SourceSafe's sophisticated version management features, letting you track and store the various revisions made to a map or model.



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