

36. A method according to claim 34, wherein the object property list contains an object property list array.

37. A method according to claim 36, further comprising the steps of:

tracking a position of objects in the object property list array; and

updating the object property list array based on the position of the objects tracked in said tracking step.

38. A method according to claim 34, wherein the unknown and known information each comprise a property of the object property list.

39. A method according to claim 34, further comprising the step of saving a modified version of the original data file, said saving step comprising the steps of:

overwriting the known information from the object property list of the original data file with information from the modified version; and

retaining the unknown information from the object property list of the original data file to keep the unknown information available to the later version.

40. A method according to claim 34, further comprising the steps of:

providing a last version object watermark in the original data file, the last version object watermark indicating a last version of the application program used to write the object; and

determining characteristics of the object in the original data file by comparing the last version object watermark to the active version of the application program.

41. A method according to claim 40, wherein, when said determining step determines that the last version object watermark corresponds to a version of the application program that is previous to the active version, said method further comprises the step of converting information in the active version of the application program based on information corresponding to the object in the original data file.

42. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 34.

43. A method for reading an original data file to be compatible with an active version and a previous version of an application program, where the original data file comprises an object property list, said method comprising the steps of:

providing an object version watermark for an object in the object property list of the original data file, the object version watermark indicating a lowest version of the application program that can interpret all properties contained in the object;

comparing the object version watermark of the object to an object version in the active version of the application program to determine whether the object in the original data file corresponds to the previous version of the application program; and

loading the original data file into the active version,

wherein, when said comparing step determines that the object in the original data file corresponds to the previous version, said loading step comprises the steps of:

converting old information corresponding to the object in the original data file to a format of the active version; and

loading the information converted in said converting step into the active version.

44. A method according to claim 43, wherein the object property list comprises an object property list array.

45. A method according to claim 43, further comprising the steps of:

tracking a position of objects in the object property list array; and

updating the object property list array based on the position of the objects tracked in said tracking step.

46. A method according to claim 43, further comprising the steps of:

saving the information converted in said converting step; and

saving the unconverted old information from the original data file.

47. A method according to claim 43, further comprising the steps of:

saving the information converted in said converting step;

generating information that corresponds to the old information from the original data file; and

saving the information generated in said generating step.

48. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 43.

49. A method for reading an original data file to be compatible with an active version and a previous version of an application program, where the original data file comprises an object property list, said method comprising the steps of:

providing an object version watermark for an object in the object property list of the original data file, the object version watermark indicating a lowest version of the application program that can interpret all properties contained in the object;

comparing the object version watermark to an object version in the active version of the application program to determine whether the object in the original data file corresponds to the previous version of the application program; and

loading the original data file into the active version,

wherein, when said comparing step determines that the object in the original data file corresponds to the previous version, said loading step comprises the steps of:

determining whether the previous version includes a deleted item that has been deleted from the active version;

ignoring old information in the original data file corresponding to the deleted item when said determining step determines that the previous version includes the deleted item; and

loading information from the original data file that corresponds to an item other than the deleted item.