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file comprises one of information derived from default values and information based on other properties in the active version.

54. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 49.

55. A method for reading an original data file to be compatible with an active version and a previous version of an application program, wherein 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 the 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 active version includes a modified item related to old information in the original data file;

converting the old information from the original data file to information corresponding to the modified item, when said determining step determines that the active version includes the modified item related to the old information in the original data file; and

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

56. A method according to claim 55, wherein the modified item comprises an object property.

57. A method according to claim 55, wherein the modified item comprises an object.

58. A method according to claim 55, further comprising the step of saving a modified version of the original data file, said saving step comprising the steps of:

saving the information corresponding to the modified item;

converting, in a second converting step, the information corresponding to the modified item to information

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corresponding to the old information and readable by the previous version; and

saving the converted information from said second converting step.

59. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 55.

60. A data file that is readable by an active version of an application program and by a later version of the application program, comprising:

an object;

an object property list array having at least one known property associated with the object, the known property being known to the active version, and having at least one unknown property associated with the object, the unknown property being unknown to the active version; and

an object version watermark indicating a lowest version of the application program that can interpret all properties contained in the object,

wherein the active version of the application program is operative to compare the object version watermark to a version number associated with the active version and to ignore the unknown property in response to a determination that the object version watermark is greater than the version number associated with the active version.

61. A data file that is readable by an active version of an application program and by a previous version of the application program, comprising:

an object;

an object property list array having at least one property associated with the object and corresponding to the previous version; and

an object version watermark indicating a lowest version of the application program that can interpret all properties contained in the object,

wherein the active version of the application program is operative to compare the object version watermark to a version number associated with the active version and to update another property associated with the object and corresponding to the active version based on a property of the at least one property in the data file, in response to a determination that the object version watermark is less than the version number associated with the active version.

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