Correct way to map DTOs for complex pages

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I have an MVC app and I have started to use DTOs exclusively to send data to views. I am using AutoMapper in order to ease this process.

Imagine I have a Customer that has many Orders. To display a simple customer overview page I can use AutoMapper with a simple DTO class that maps the Customer name, address etc. To map the orders I can AutoMapper a List<> of Customer.Orders to a more simple List<CustomerOrderDTO>.

I am now stuck on pages where I want both in the same view. Perhaps a simple headline with the customer name and phone number, then a list of orders. In some cases partials are the perfect solution, but not all.

So my question is how a DTO for a page such as this should look, and how that should be mapped (preferably using AutoMapper). In my research so far, I can't see how AutoMapper can map embedded enumerables like this.

model-view-controller   automapper   dto

asked Mar 10 '11 at 22:19

user654384

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1 Answer

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when you create your mappings, ignore the collections/enumerables and just map simple objects to simple objects, for example

```
CreateMap<Order, CustomerOrderDTO>()
```

when you execute the mapping, you can use collections and AutoMapper will just do the right thing, for example

```
Map<IEnumerable<Order>, IEnumerable<CustomerOrderDTO>>()
```

if you're mapping an object contains the collection, for example `Customer` to `CustomerDTO`, where each one has it's collection of orders, as long as you've done `CreateMap` for the customer objects and `CreateMap` for the `Order` objects, the enumerable will just map

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edited Mar 23 '11 at 18:42   answered Mar 11 '11 at 17:45

John Meyer

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Thanks, I'll give that a go. I was missing how it mapped collections that were contained within the object, but from what you say it is just a case of creating both mappings first. –   user654384   Mar 12 '11 at 13:03