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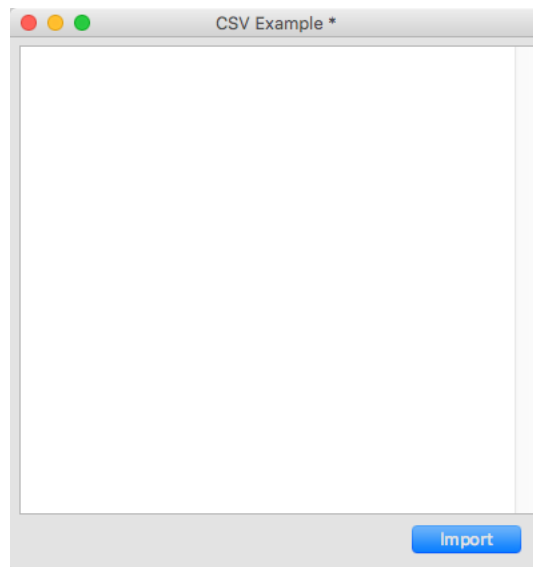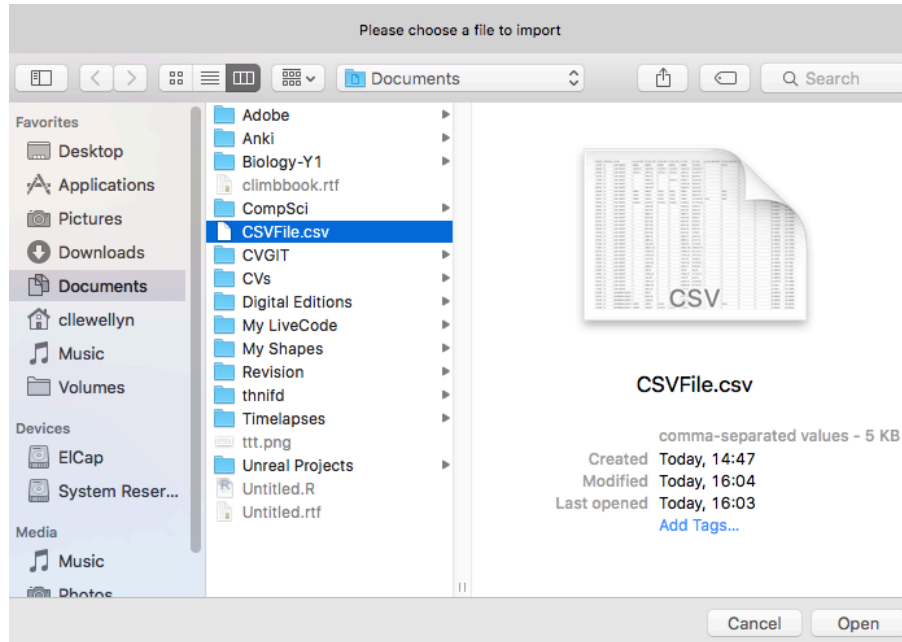
How do I rename the headers on a text file?

When working with data imported from external files you need to be able to import, modify and export the data. In this lesson we will look at importing a csv file and renaming the headers. Text processing of this kind is an area of particular strength for LiveCode.

Create the interface

First lets make the interface for importing and displaying the csv file. Open a new stack and add a field, called "text" and a button called "import".
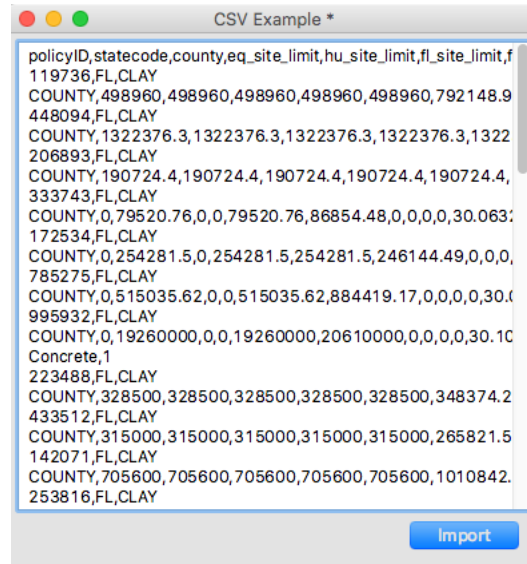
Script the import button

We need to allow the user to choose a file to import. We use the **answer file** command to display a dialog allowing the user to choose a file. We can use **answer file with type** to ensure that only CSV files are displayed.

We check the **result** function to make sure the user has not cancelled the dialog. If the dialog has not been cancelled the filename of the file they have chosen is put into the **it** variable. We will put the value into the variable tFileName so we can use it later.

```
on mouseUp
      local tFileName

      answer file "Please choose a file to import" with type "Comma Separated Values|csv|CSV"
       if the result is not "cancel" then
             put it into tFileName
      end if
end mouseUp
```

Display the data

The previous step gave us the path to the file we want to display, but not the actual data. To get the contents of the file we can use the **URL** keyword. We add a line to the script of our button to get the contents of the file and put them in a variable, we then add another line to put the file contents into the field.
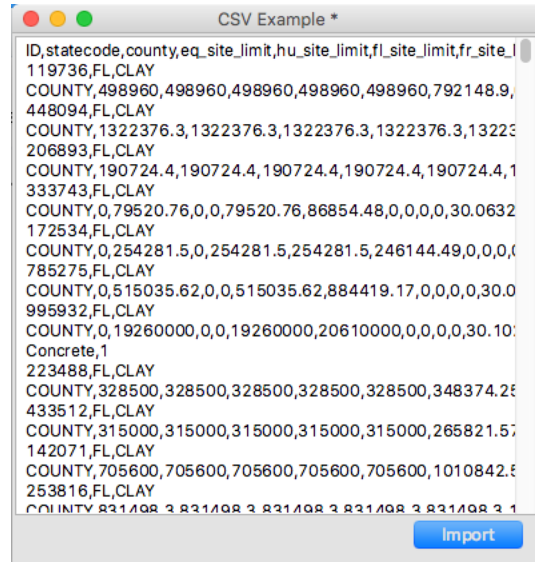
```
on mouseUp
       local tFileName, tFileContents

       answer file "Please choose a file to import" with type "Comma Separated Values|csv|CSV"
       if the result is not "cancel" then
              put it into tFileName

               ## Get the contents of the file
              put URL ("file:" & tFileName) into tFileContents

              ## Display the file contents in the field
              put tFileContents into field "text"
       end if
end mouseUp
```

Rename the headers

At this stage we want to rename the headers of our file, perhaps to remove spaces from the headers. There are a number of ways to do this in LiveCode, the simplest is to edit the field manually, but if you were using a non-editable field to display the data you could use the **replace** command. This replaces one piece of text with another piece of text.

In this case we might want to replace the column header "policy ID" with "ID" we can do this by executing the following line in the message box

```
replace "policy ID" with "ID" in field "text"
```

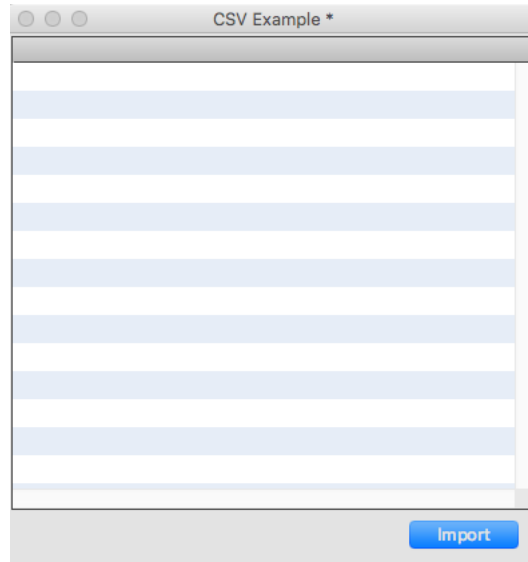As you can see the column header has been changed in the field.

Watch out

You have to be careful when using **replace** because it will replace all instances of the given text with the new text. We only want to replace the column header so if we want to be a little more careful we can modify our LiveCode to only look at the first line of the field.

replace "policy ID" with "ID" in line 1 of field "text"

This means if the text "policy ID" appears anywhere else in the field it won't be replaced.
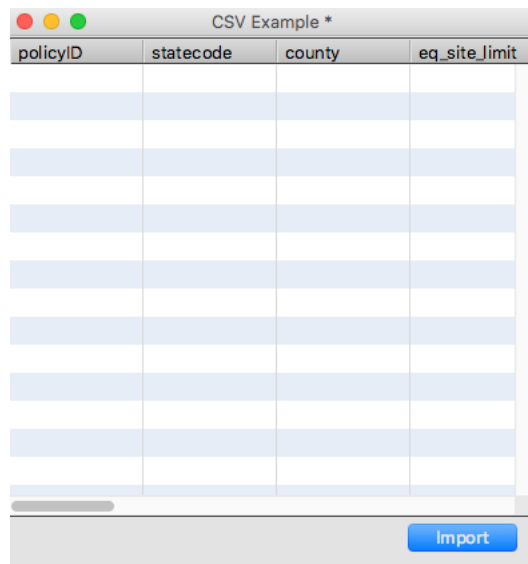
Using a datagrid

A field is simple but not the clearest way of displaying our data, so lets import the csv file and display it in a data grid instead. Data grids provide a simple and flexible means of displaying data, for more information have a look at the data grid lessons at

http://lessons.runrev.com/spaces/lessons/manuals/datagrid

Firstly lets remove our field and add a data grid instead, we will name it "text" again.
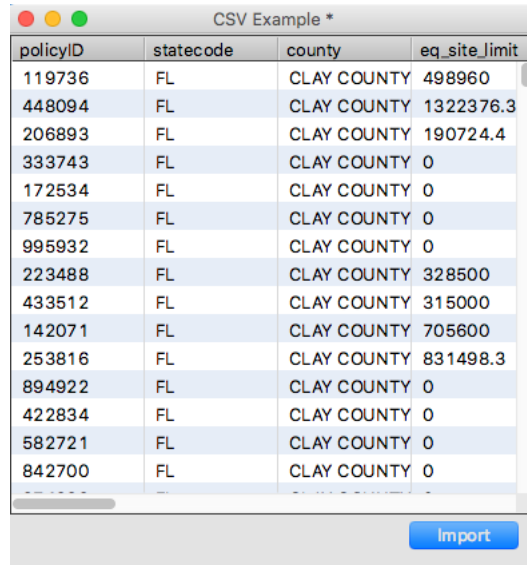
Set up the data grid columns

Choosing the file works the same way as before but now we need to do a little extra work to display the data, not much though.

Firstly we need to set up the column titles in the datagrid, we know these are in the first line of our csv file. To set up the column titles of a data grid in LiveCode we need to set the **columns** property of the datagrid, this is a line delimited list so we take the first line of our file, replace the commas with return and set the **column** property of the data grid

```
put line 1 of tFileContents into tColumnTitles
replace comma with return in tColumnTitles
set the dgProp[ "columns" ]  of group "text" to tColumnTitles
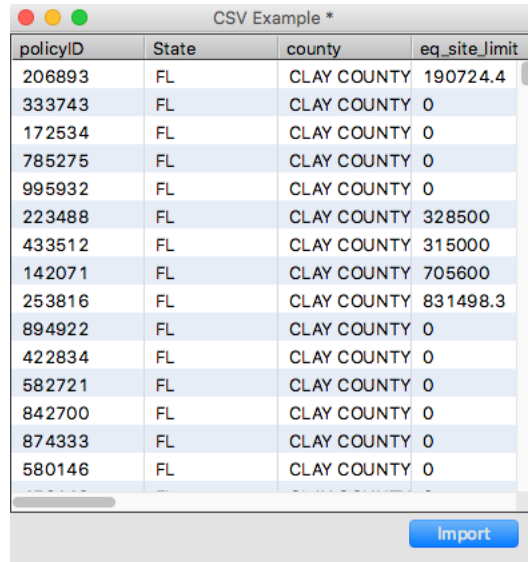```

## Display the data in the data grid



To display our data in the data grid we set the **dgText** property of the data grid. The **dgText** is tab separated so we need to replace our commas with tabs. We will also specify that the first line of the data contains the column headers, all the data will then be assigned to the appropriate column depending on the first line. We pass the value true for the parameter pFirstLineContainsHeaders of **dgText.**

```
replace comma with tab in tFileContents
set the dgText[true] of group "text" to tFileContents
```

Rename a header in the data grid

Renaming a column in a data grid is very simple, just a single line of LiveCode. Again you can execute this line in the message box, or you could add a button.

```
set dgColumnName ["statecode"] of group "text" to "State"
```

1   Comments

William Moseid   Wednesday Oct 03 2012 at 07:19 AM

Good Stuff . . .