

# Actions Tech. Note 6

## Draft 1.0

### Adding DB markup to HTML attributes.

There are situations where when writing actions where you want to have attributes that are generated through ASP, PHP (etc.) mark-up. For example if you want to set the value of a checkbox programatically you might want code of the following form:

```
<input type=checkbox name="choice" value="1" <? if($choice=1){echo "checked" ;}?>>
```

The question is how do you add an attribute that is really an arbitrary string rather than being of the form "xxx=yyy".

If you don't want to write an action to do it you can do this by extending the item ("Item -> Extended") if you add your code (e.g. `<? if($choice=1){echo "checked" ;}?>`) to "value" but not to the "name". If you leave the "name" field blank Freeway will dump in all the text in the value field as raw data.

If you need this sort of functionality within an action there are two ways that you can do it. The first one described is not the best way but it is interesting as it shows some of the features of Freeway's document model.

#### Route A (not the best way)

If you have a tag, say an input tag of the form

```
<input type=checkbox name="item1">
```

You can get the tag with `fwFind` in the normal way

```
var myTag=fwDocument.fwTags.fwFind("input", fwItem);
```

However if you then access one of the attributes, say the "type" attribute.

```
var myAttribute = myTag.type;
```

you do not have a string "checkbox" you have an object of type `FWAttribute`. Nine times out of ten this looks, feels and acts like a string as you will discover if you compare it with a string, call `alert` etc. You may be mistaken in thinking it is a string - as JavaScript will coerce it to a string when the need arises.

`FWAttribute` is actually a subclass of `FWOutput` as is `FWTag`. This means that you can use the same methods like `fwAddRaw` to append raw data to the attribute. So if you write:

```
myTag.fwAddRaw(' <? if($choice=1){echo "checked" ;}?>')
```

you will get:

```
<input type=checkbox <? if($choice=1){echo "checked" ;}?> name="item1">
```

Basically what has happened is that a lump of raw data has been added to the end of the "type" attribute.

The following Action extends an input tag in this way:

```
<item-action name="Extend Input">
<action-text name="Attribute" />
<action-text name="Extend" />
<action-javascript>

function fwBeforeEndBody()
{
    var extendStr = fwParameters["Extend"].toString();
    var attributeStr = fwParameters["Attribute"].toString();

    var tags = fwDocument.fwTags.fwFindAll("input", fwItem);
    for (var i in tags)
    {
        var tag = tags[i];

        // delete the attribute
        if (attributeStr)
            tag[attributeStr] = null;

        typeAttribute = tag.type;
        if (typeAttribute)
        {
            // append the Extend string on to the back of the "type"
            // attribute so if you have
            //
            //     type=checkbox
            //
            // it will become
            //
            //     type=checkbox <? if($choice=1){echo "checked";}?>

            typeAttribute.fwAddRaw(" ", extendStr);
        }
    }
}

</action-javascript>
</item-action>
```

The nasty thing about this is that it relies on finding a type attribute and then appending raw data to the end of it.

## Route B (the best way)

This way is better as it is quite a lot cleaner and is simpler to implement. It relies on the fact that a property in JavaScript can be **any text**, and in our document model tag attributes are represented as properties.

Recapping; in JavaScript you can have properties

```
myObject['red']='';
```

and also

```
myObject['red ball']='';
```

and also

```
myObject['This is a huge long property name']='';
```

and even

```
myObject['<? if($choice=1){echo "checked" ;}?>']='';
```

And this is the key. In Freeway within the HTML

```
<input type=checkbox checked name="item1">
```

the type attribute

```
type=checkbox
```

is represented as

```
myTag['type']='checkbox';
```

but the attribute which has no value

```
enabled
```

is represented as

```
myTag['enabled']='';
```

so if you have a tag and give it a huge long property you can do it. If you assign a value of empty string ("") to it Freeway will output that attribute on it's own with out the assignment. So having found your tag you can just say

```
myTag['<? if($choice=1){echo "checked" ;}?>']='';
```

The following Extend Attribute will extend an arbitrary attribute on any given tag.

```
<item-action name="Extend Attribute">
<action-text name="Tag" default="input"/>
<action-text name="Attribute" />
<action-text name="Extend" />
<action-javascript>

function fwBeforeEndBody()
{
    var tagStr = fwParameters["Tag"].toString().toLowerCase();
    var extendStr = fwParameters["Extend"].toString();
    var attributeStr = fwParameters["Attribute"].toString();

    var tags = fwDocument.fwTags.fwFindAll(tagStr, fwItem);
    for (var i in tags)
    {
        var tag = tags[i];

        // delete the attribute
        if (attributeStr)
            tag[attributeStr] = null;

        tag[extendStr] = "";
    }
}
```

```
}
```

```
</action-javascript>  
</item-action>
```