

Purpose:

This is a plugin for Eclipse that will create a new View that will extract a RPTDesign from a RPTDocument and create Data Sources that will allow someone to connect to the RPTDocument. This was created as a maintenance utility for diagnosing and troubleshooting BIRT reports.

As a report designer, consultant, and frequenter of the BIRT Exchange Forums, I get asked quite a bit to help troubleshoot reports. The same problem always creeps up, I need access to some form of their data in order to troubleshoot, which is usually impossible as the backend database is behind a firewall. This plugin addresses this issue. What it will do is given a RPTDocument (which will contain a copy of the original Report Design, and the Runtime data that the user sees), it will extract the design file, read through all of the tables used in the report, and create a RPTDocument Data Set for each of them, allowing the troubleshooter to then set the data binding accordingly and try to diagnose the issue.

Installation:

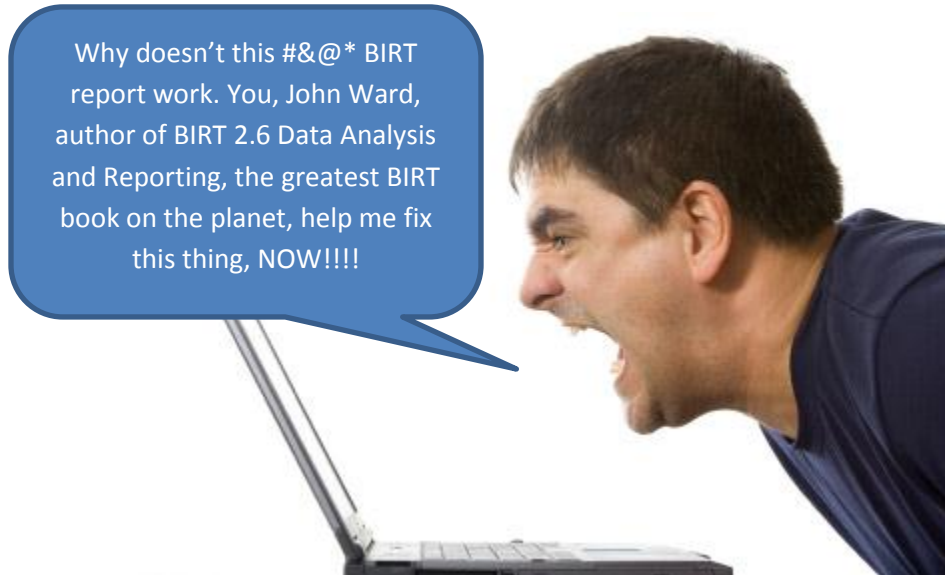
This is a single Eclipse plugin. Copy the `com.digiassn.blogspot.birt.plugin.reportextractor_1.XXXX.jar` into the `/Eclipse/plugins` folder.

This plugin requires BIRT 3.7.2 Design Environment and requires the Report Document ODA v 1.1 to work. The Report Document ODA is available from the BIRT Exchange.

Usage:

1.

Why doesn't this #&@* BIRT report work. You, John Ward, author of BIRT 2.6 Data Analysis and Reporting, the greatest BIRT book on the planet, help me fix this thing, NOW!!!!

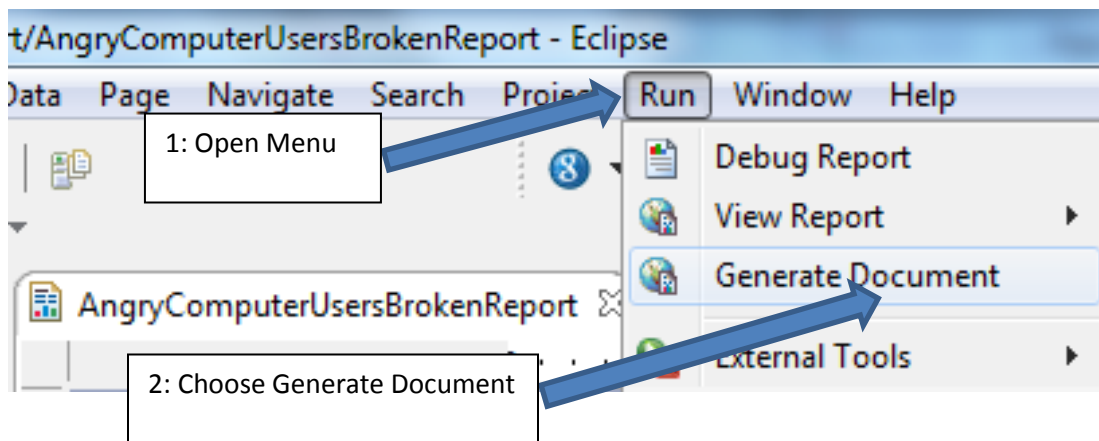


2.



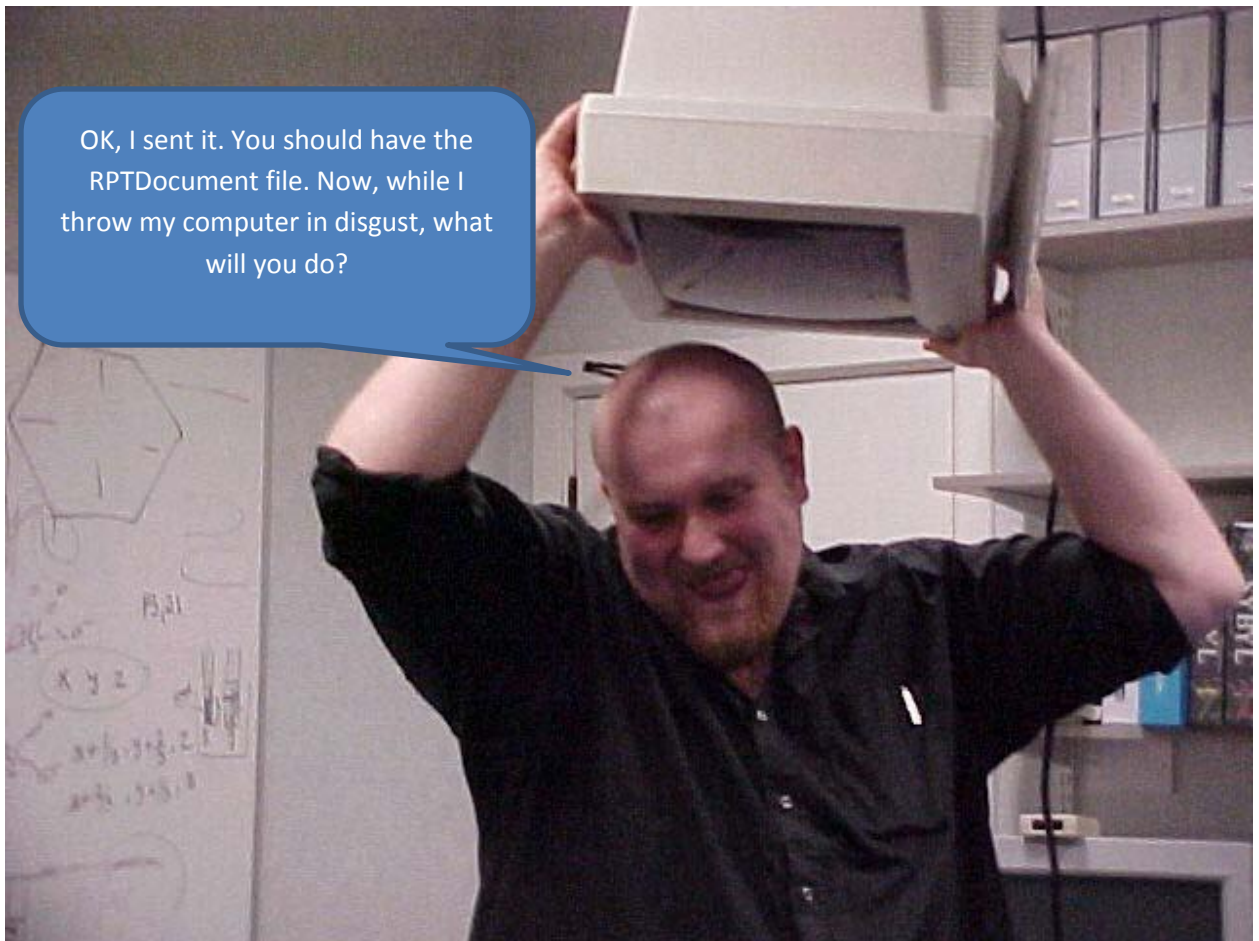
No problem. I will gladly help you while I am enjoying a tasty burger at Casino El Camino, the best burger place in Austin, Tx! Here is what I need you to do...

3. First, go up to the Run Menu in the BIRT Report Designer, and choose Generate Report Document...

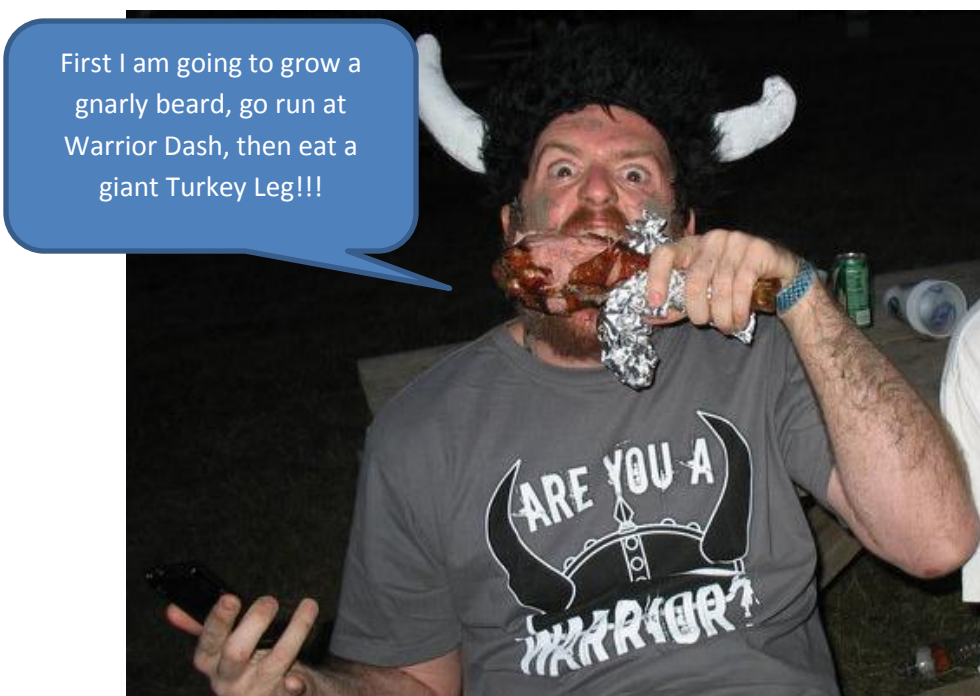


4. ...then send me the RPTDocument.

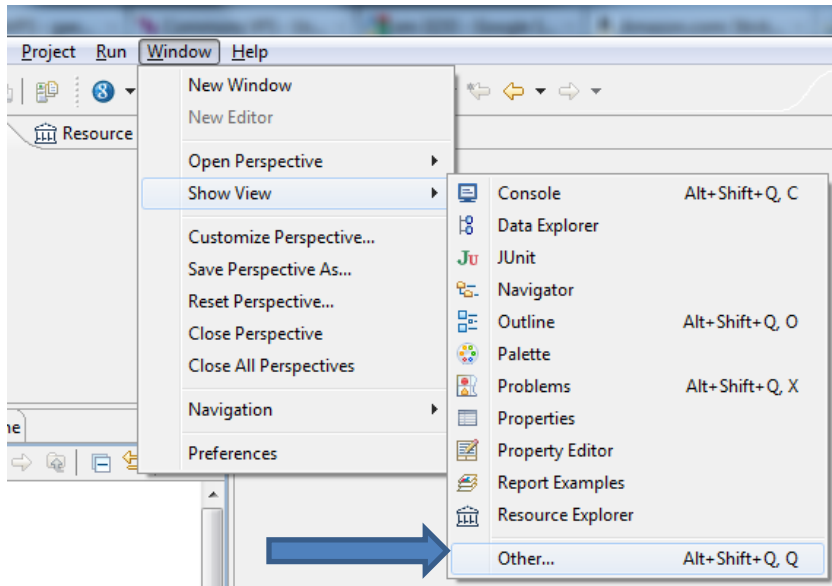
5.



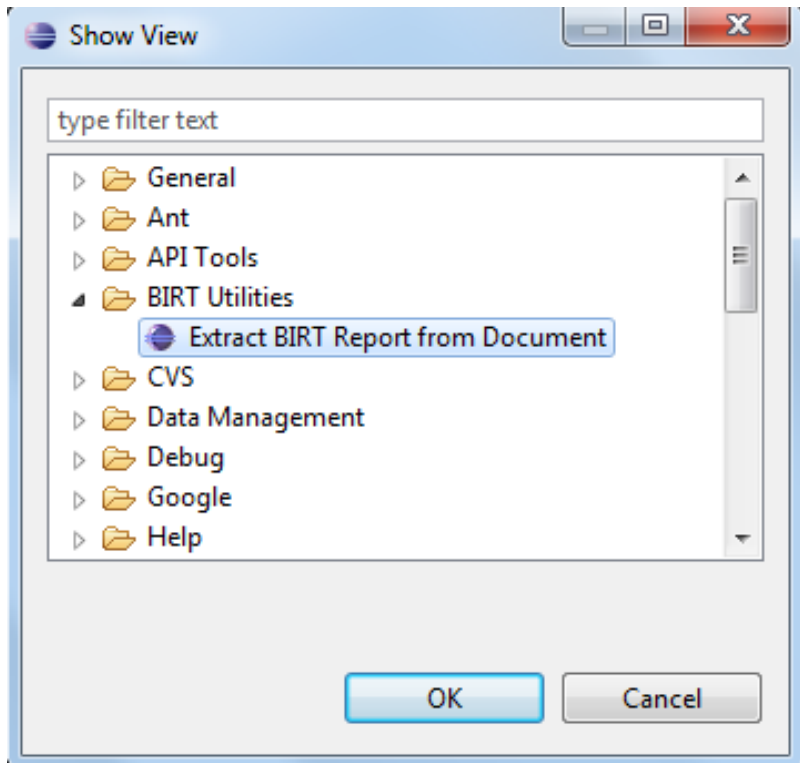
6.



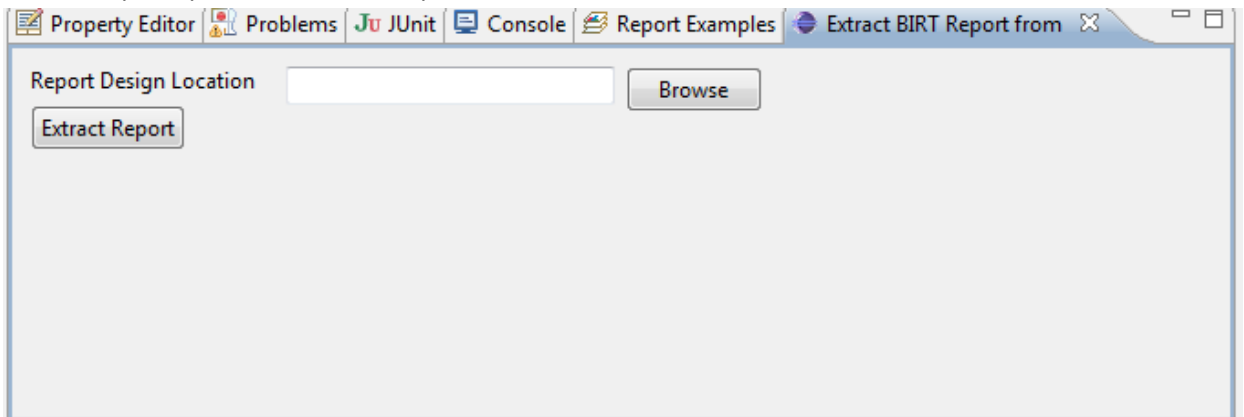
7. ...after that, I will open up Eclipse.
8. Then go to the Window/Show View/Other menu.



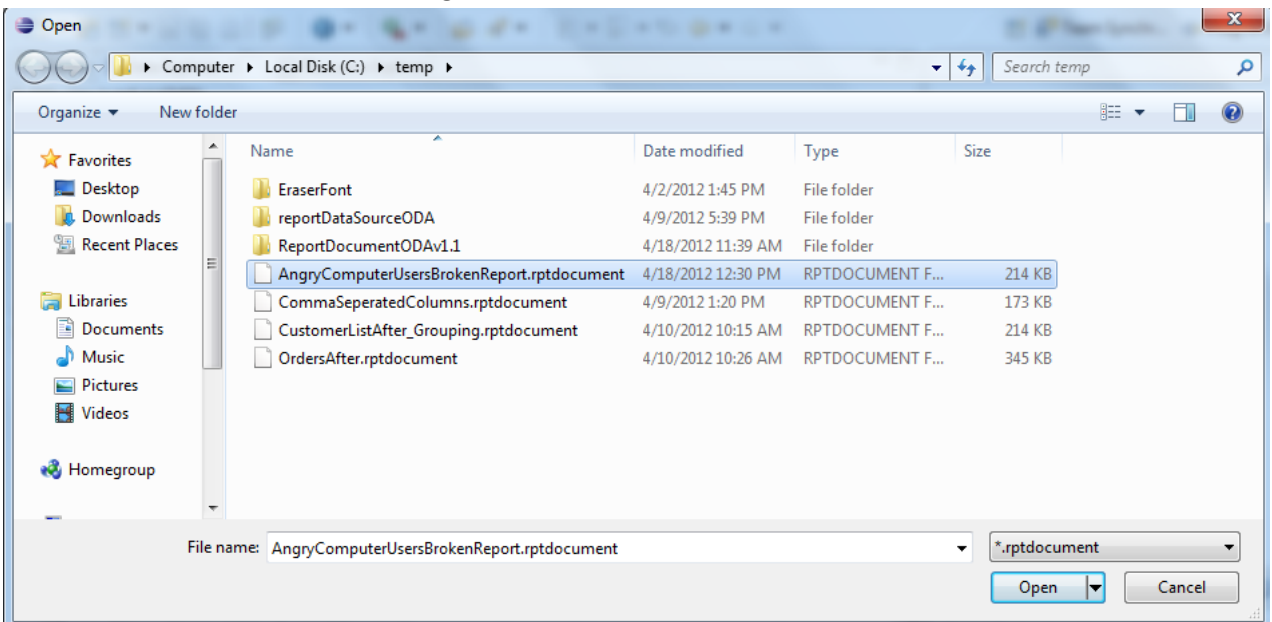
9. Under BIRT Utilities, I will open Extract BIRT Report from Document



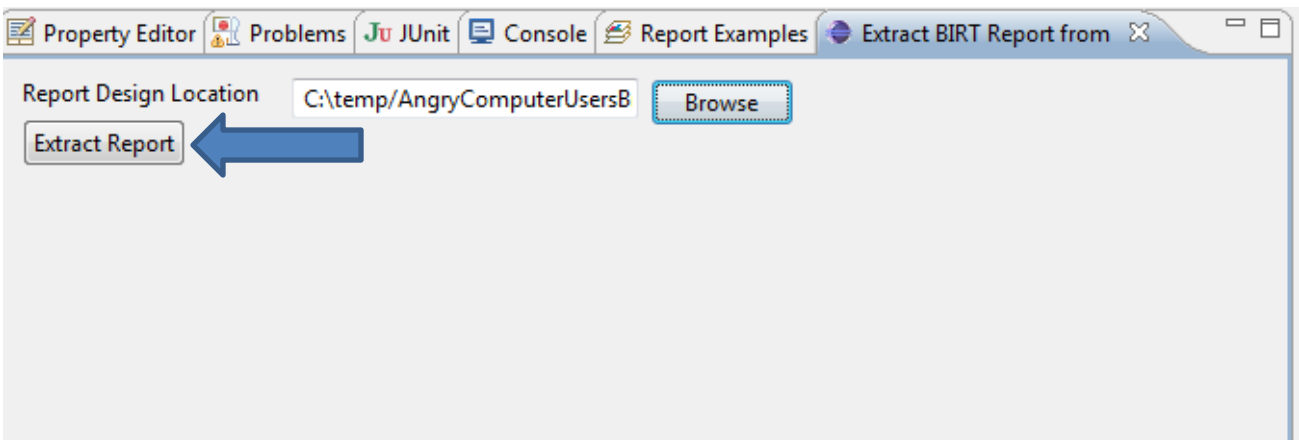
10. This will open up a new view in Eclipse.



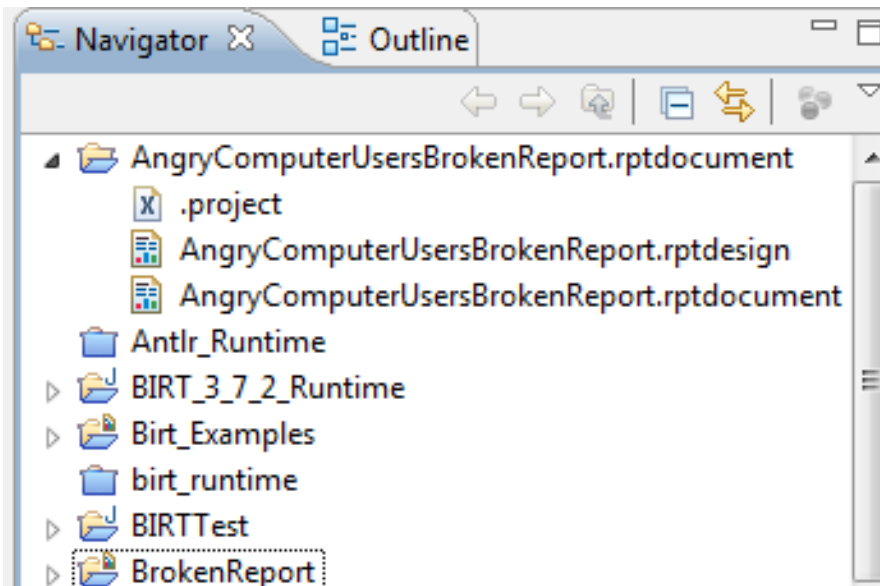
11. Click on the Browse button, and navigate to where the RPTDocument is saved.



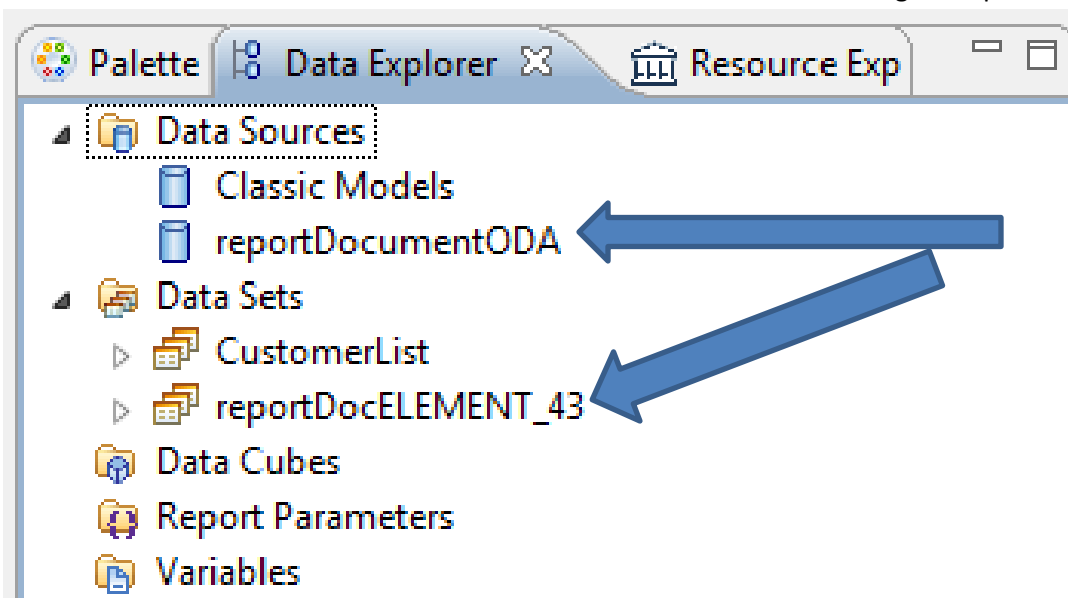
12. Then click on Extract Report



13. This will create a new project with the name of the report to troubleshoot, the original RPTDocument, and the extracted Report Design file.



14. Inside of the report design file, the Report Document ODA has been created as a Data Source, and Data sets have been created for each of the Tables that were in the original report.

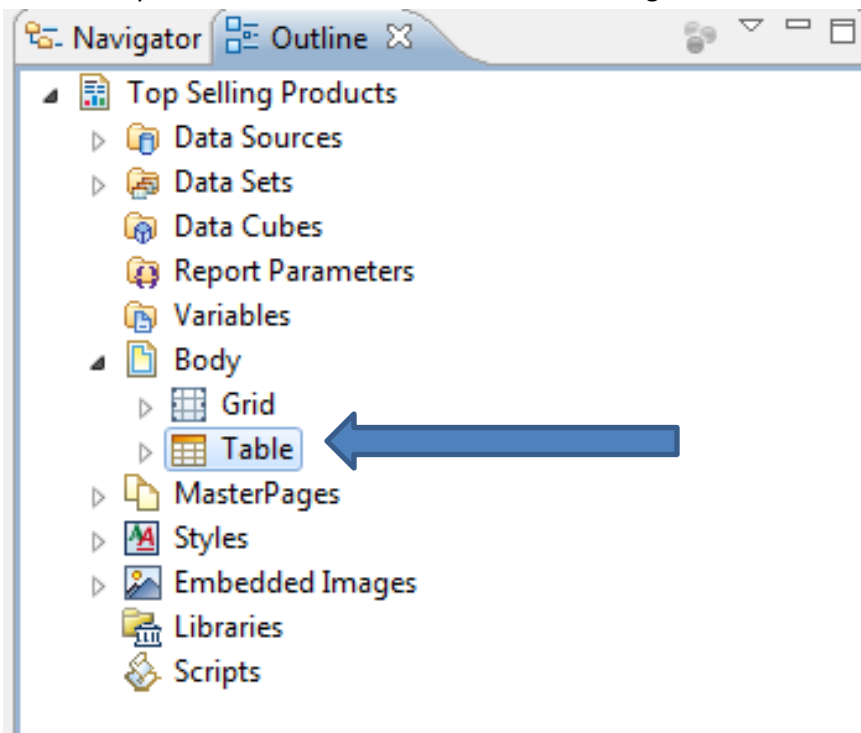


15.

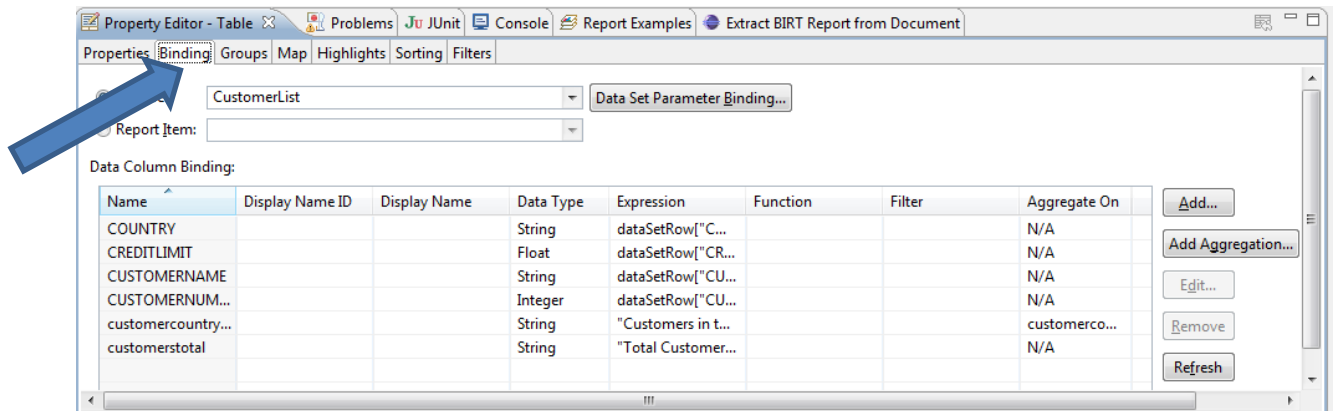


Wow John, you think of everything.

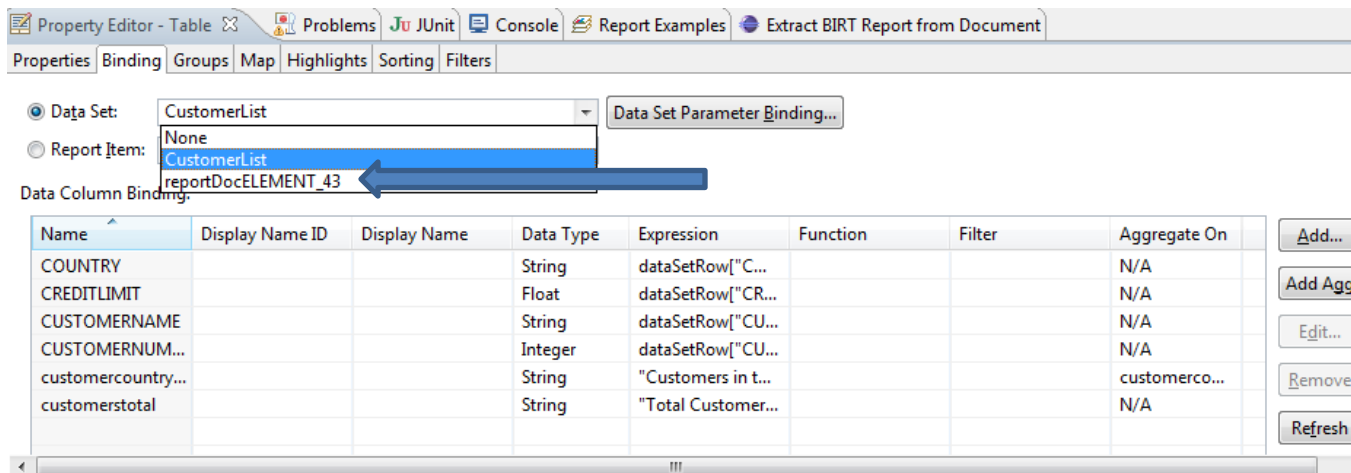
16. Well, not everything. The next step is manual. We need to bind the tables to the new Data Sets. The reason this is done manually is because there is no way to guarantee that the correct data will get bound to the correct table all the time. So there is some user intervention. First, I need to select my table. I like to use the Outline for selecting exact elements.



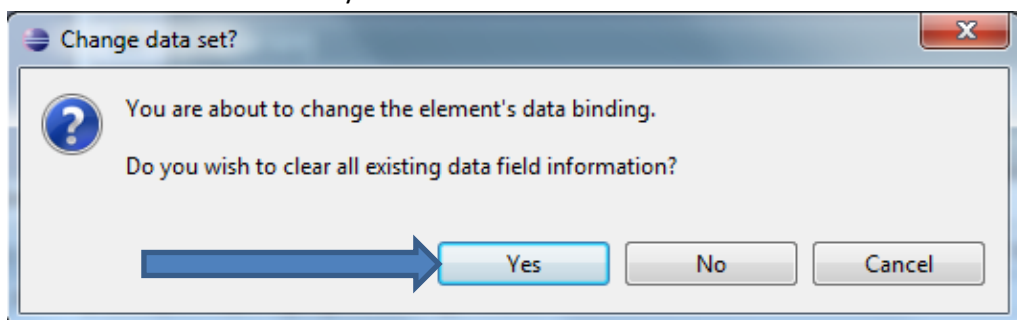
17. Then, from the Property Editor, I open the Data Binding tab.



18. Then, from the Data Sets drop down, I will select the correct Data Set to use for the RPTDocument.



19. Usually I get prompted to replace all existing bindings. You can usually just say Yes, since the column names will be exactly the same.



20. And now I can preview the report and get a good idea of what the user is experiencing.

21.



Notes:

- As mentioned above, Data Set binding will not be done automatically.
- If the report will not run at all, then the RPTDocument cannot be generated. This utility will not help in those cases.