



qtsss – a Quantum to triple-s Converter

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Introduction

The program qtsss converts Quantum program and data files to triple-s format, which can then be imported by a wide variety of survey software.

The converter is a modified version of nqtspss, the SPSS MR program that generates SPSS command and data files from Quantum. The program works on the intermediate Quantum files generated during a run, which means that the wide variety of Quantum statements have already been simplified into elements within axes.

Because triple-s, like many survey software programs, is variable based, we recommend you prepare your run in the same way that you prepare runs for Quanvert databases. Some guidelines are given at the end of this document.

The converter is currently supplied to run on SCO Unix, Solaris and as a console application (i.e. in a DOS window) under Windows 9x, Windows NT and Windows 2000.

The program outputs both 'classic' triple-s 1.1 and triple-s XML 1.1.

Installation

The program is a single file:

Unix:	qtsss
Windows:	qtsss.exe

Installing on Unix

1. Download and copy the file to the directory where you normally store ad hoc programs. This is usually /usr/local/bin but it may be different on your system.
2. Check that all appropriate users have execute permission on the file.
3. Check that all users have the installation directory in their path.
4. If users are logged in when you install the program they will need to re-login or rehash their path to pick up the program.
5. Confirm the program works by typing **qtsss -x** to display the program help.

Installing on Windows

Copy the qtsss.exe file into your Windows folder, or any appropriate folder that is in your path when you open a DOS Window.

Confirm the program works by opening a DOS window and typing **qtsss -x** to display the program help.

Note: you will not be able to run **qtsss** if you have booted your PC in MS DOS mode. You must be in a DOS Window with Windows running.

Running the program

The converter is based on `nqtspss`, the SPSS MR program that generates SPSS from Quantum. This program works by reading the intermediate files produced during a Quantum run, and generating triple-s variables based on your Quantum axes, along with an associated data file. Quantum normally cleans up its intermediate files so you will need to run Quantum with the `-k` flag (or run **quantumx**) to keep them. The intermediate files can be removed after the conversion by using the program **quclean**. You may also prefer to use the `-td` flag to put the intermediate files in a separate temporary directory:

```
quantum -k -td sss run1 data
```

or

```
quantumx -td sss run1 data
```

Once your run is complete, change to the temporary directory and run the program **qtsss**:

```
quantum -k -td sss run1 data
cd sss
qtsss
```

This will generate:

Survey.xml	XML triple-s metadata file (variable descriptions and data layout information)
Survey.asc	The case or respondent data file

To generate a Classic triple-s file run **qtsss -f classic**

You may need to make changes to your run files to get the maximum amount of information generated in the triple-s file. See the section on **Preparing your run** for more details.

Options when running qtsss

The following command line options are available:

- `-f classic` Outputs Classic triple-s format. Output is called **survey.sss**
- `-p N` Specifies *N* decimal places for numeric data. Without this option the program scans the data for the required number of decimal places.
- `-l` Joins multiple titles. By default only the first title in an axis is output.
- `-m S` Uses string *S* for missing values. By default the value is a space.
- `-x` Displays brief help on the program options.

triple-s variable types supported

qtsss generates the following variables:

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Single | The axis is single-coded i.e. each respondent falls into no more than one of the axis elements. |
| Multiple | The axis is multi-coded. A respondent may fall into more than one axis element. |

Quantity Expressions on inc= options are output as quantity variables.
Weighting factors are also output as quantity variables.

Preparing your run

The triple-s specification is based on variables, where typically each variable is a question. The same guidelines that apply to preparing a Quanvert database also apply when preparing a run for triple-s conversion.

1. One axis per question

You should ensure that each axis represents a single question. If, for example, you have a break (banner) axis that consists of multiple questions, this will be output as a single multi-coded variable. Similarly, if you have a battery of rating scales in a single axis these will also be output as a single multi-coded variable. We recommend you split these axes into single questions wherever possible.

2. Only the first title is output

The converter only picks up the first title in an axis. The title is chosen in the following order:

- a) l-statement hd=
- b) First ttl within axis
- c) n23 within axes

For example, if you have both a ttl and an n23 title, only the ttl will be output to triple-s. Similarly, if your table title is split across more than one ttl, only the first one will be output.

Note: You can join multiple ttl titles by using the -l option.

3. inc= options

qtsss will output all inc= options as separate quantity variables. If they are part of an axis they will not be output within the axis. The inc'd expression will be used as the name of the quantity variable so you should try to use named variables, setting them up in the edit section.

For example, the statement `n25;inc=c(424,428)*confac` will output a variable called "`c(424,428)*confac`"

4. n03 sub-headings not output

If an axis contains n03 sub-headings that are important to the meaning of the axis you may need to consider splitting up the axis (see point 1 above) or including the sub-heading as part of the next number generating row (e.g. the next n01). n03 sub-headings are not output.

5. Always include a title in each axis

Each axis should contain a title of some sort (see point 2 above). If you do not have a title the variable is output with the label "@" which is not helpful for the recipient.

6. tab section statements ignored

Instructions in the tab section (as opposed to the axes section) are ignored by qtsss. If you have filters in the tab section you may wish to consider placing them on the relevant axes.

Note: inc= statements in the tab section are not ignored.

7. levels not supported

The converter will not work on levels projects.

Feedback

If you have any comments, suggestions or problems with this program please e-mail Raz Khan (raz@atp.co.uk). Please bear in mind that we have carried out this work free of charge and do not get paid to support the converter. Fixes and support might therefore not be immediate.

Thanks go to SPSS MR for providing the source code to nqtspss.

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