Adding and removing custom-property fields

On this screen, you can add or remove custom-property fields from one or more masters at a time.

Master Shapes Select one or more masters with custom properties you want to add, edit, or remove. To select more than one master at a time, hold down the Ctrl key while you click.

Custom Properties Lists the custom-property fields for the master(s) selected in the Master Shapes list. Custom-property fields associated with more than one master are listed only once. Select a custom-property field to edit it or to remove it from the selected masters.

Add Click to add a custom-property field to one or more masters selected in the Master Shapes list.

Remove Click to remove the selected custom-property field from one or more masters selected in the Master Shapes list.

Edit Property Click to edit attributes, such as name, data type, and display prompt, of the selected custom-property field. Changes you make are reflected in the ShapeSheet spreadsheets and Custom Properties dialog boxes for all masters (whether selected or not) with which the property is associated.

Adding custom-property fields

The Custom Properties Editor automatically adds the information you enter on these three screens (click a screen's tab to view it) into the Custom Properties section of the ShapeSheet spreadsheet for each affected master. Each option below corresponds to a cell in the ShapeSheet.

General

Name Type a name for the new custom-property field you're adding. For example, if you add a cost custom-property field to a network master shape, type the name Cost. The label can include any alphanumeric characters, including the underscore (_) character. This is the label you see in the Custom Properties dialog box.

Type Specifies a data type for the custom-property value. Choose a type from the list. If you want to choose a format for the data type, click the **Format** tab.

Default Value Type a value for the custom-property field that is assigned to each instance of a master shape by default. For example, if you add a cost custom-property field to a network master shape and you assign a default value of $1000, each instance of that master has its cost set at $1000 when you drop it on the page. If you don't want the new custom-property field to have a default value, leave the box blank. The default value appears automatically in the Custom Properties dialog box.

Default Units Choose the unit you want Visio to apply when custom-property data is entered into the Custom Properties dialog box with no units specified. If you type a value in the dialog box that includes a unit (for example, 12 centimeters), then that unit takes precedence over the default specified here. This option is not available for data types that aren't specified in units.

Format

Type Specifies a data type for the custom-property value. Choose a type from the drop-down list.

Sample Based on your choices for default units and format, indicates how your data will appear in the Custom Properties dialog box.

Format Specifies the formatting for the data type selected under Type. Each data type has a default format. If you choose:

Fixed list, Visio displays the list items in a drop-down combo box in the Custom Properties dialog box.

Variable list, Visio displays the list items in a drop-down box in the Custom Properties dialog box. Users can select a list item or enter a new item that is added to the current list.

To add an item to a Fixed or Variable list, click Add, type the item name, then click OK. To remove an item, select it, then click Remove.

Advanced

Row Name Optional. If you don't specify a row name, the Custom Properties Editor generates one for you. Specifies the row label that appears in the ShapeSheet window in red text. If you type Cost here, the row name Prop.Cost appears in the ShapeSheet window.

Prompt Optional. Specifies descriptive or instructional text that appears to users in the Custom Properties dialog box when the property is selected.

Sort Key Optional. Specifies a key that determines how items in the Custom Properties

dialog box are listed. The sort is locale-specific, case-insensitive, and descending.

For example, enter the following sort keys to display the custom properties in the dialog box in the order: Item Number, Quantity, Price:

Row	Label	Sort Key
Item	Item Number	1
Price	Price	3
Quan	Quantity	2

Ask On Drop   Check to have Visio prompt you for a custom-property value each time you drop an instance of the master shape you're editing on the page. Then, when you drop a shape, the Custom Properties dialog box opens and displays only the properties for which this option is checked.

Hidden   Check to prevent the custom-property field you're adding from appearing in the Custom Properties dialog box. This option is useful if you don't want users to change the value or if you want to access the value programmatically only-for example, from a macro. **Hidden** takes precedence over **Ask On Drop**   If both are checked, a property field doesn't appear in the Custom Properties dialog box.

Editing shape custom-property fields

The Custom Properties Editor adds, edits, or removes custom-property fields only to or from masters on standalone or local stencils.

Shape In A Stencil Choose this option to edit masters on a standalone stencil. A standalone stencil is a file with the .vss file extension. Changes to custom-property fields for a master on a standalone stencil are reflected in each instance of the master that you subsequently drop on the drawing page. By default, the wizard opens a copy of the stencil so that you won't edit the original master, but you can choose to open the original stencil.

Shapes In The Active Drawing Choose this option to edit masters on the local stencil in the currently active drawing. A local stencil is a stencil specific to a drawing file that includes all the masters you used in the drawing, regardless of which stencils originally contained those masters. Changes to custom-property fields for a master on the local stencil are reflected in each instance of that master currently on the drawing page and in subsequent instances you drop.

Shapes In Another Visio Drawing Choose this option to edit masters on the local stencil in a drawing other than the active one. A local stencil is a stencil specific to a drawing file that automatically includes all the masters you used in the drawing, regardless of which stencils originally contained those masters. Changes to custom-property fields for a master on the local stencil are reflected in each instance of that master currently on the drawing page and in subsequent instances you drop.

A custom-property field functions like a database field for a shape so you can add data or other information to shapes. Many Visio shapes come with custom-property fields already assigned. For example, the fence shapes in the Landscape stencil have a fence thickness custom-property field. The Network equipment shapes have custom-property fields for manufacturer, product name, and part number. Using the Custom Properties Editor, you can add new custom-property fields to shapes, edit existing property fields, or remove property fields you no longer want to use.

If you want to change the value in an existing custom-property field(for example, assign a product name to an instance of the Desktop Systems shape in a network diagram), you don't need to run the Custom Properties Editor. To change a custom-property value, select the shape with the value you want to change, then choose Shape > Custom Properties.