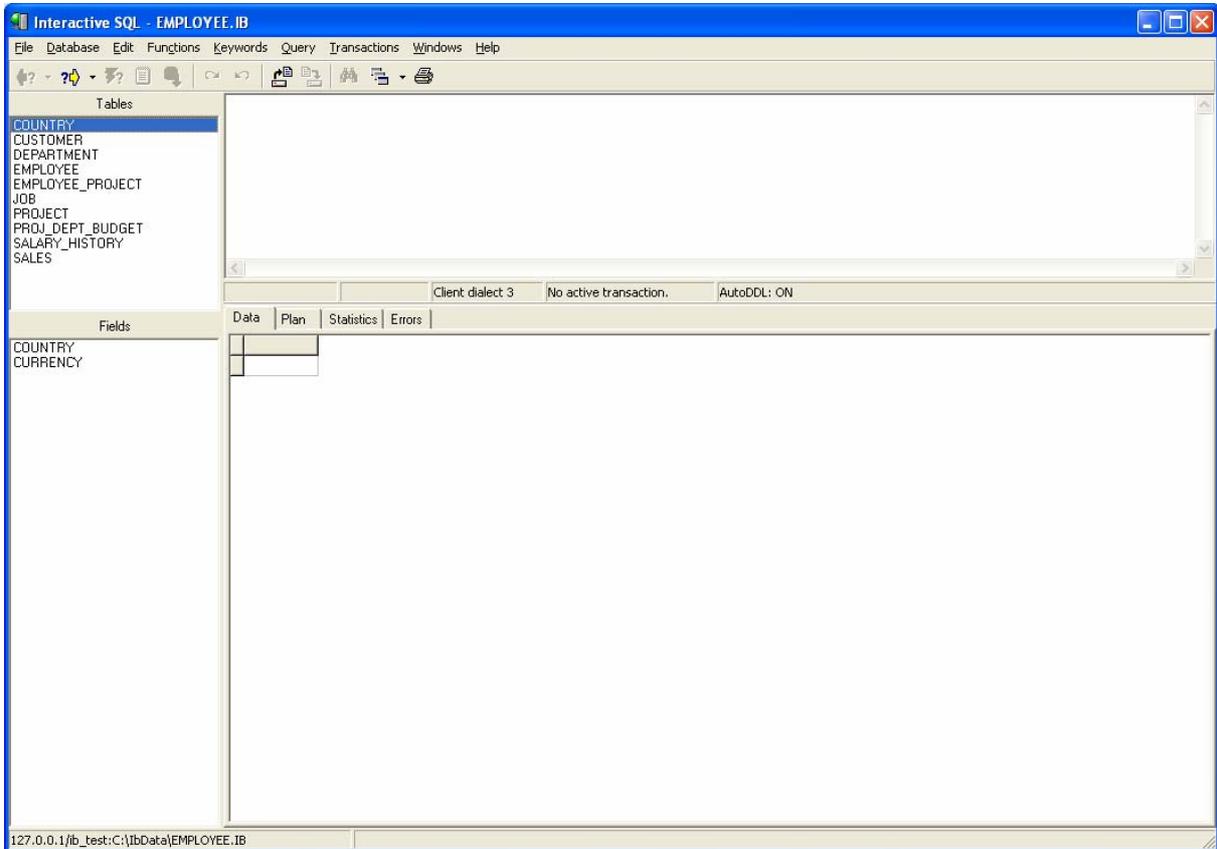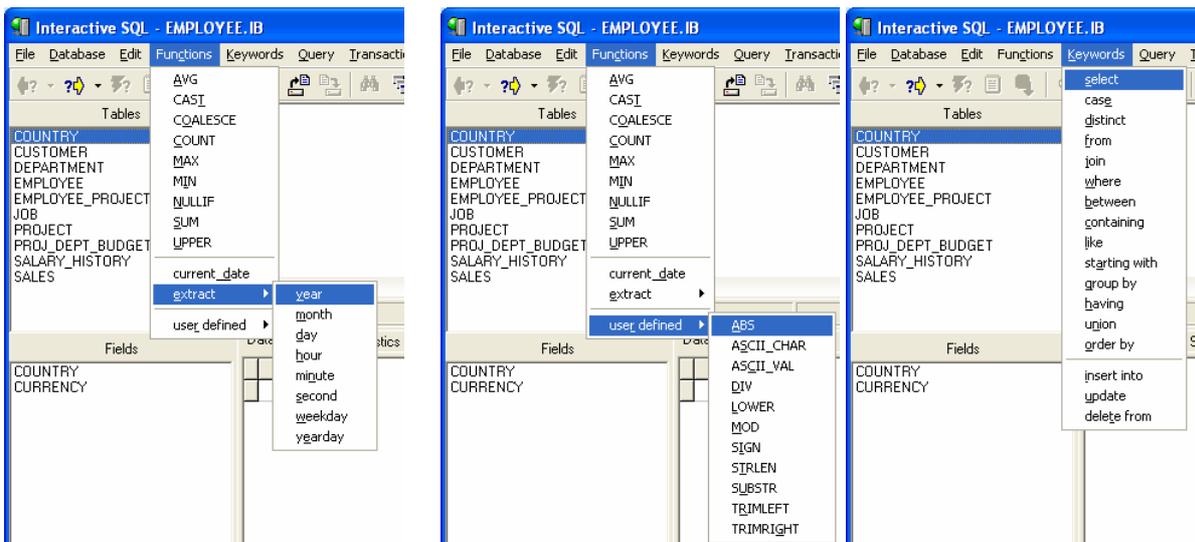## Using SQL window in IBConsole.

The SQL window in IBConsole has been made a lot user friendly. The picture below shows the new layout.

On the left listboxes with Tables and Fields are displayed. The Fields listbox displays the Fields for the selected table in the Table listbox.

The menu is extended with the options Functions and Keywords.

The Functions menu is divided in three groups. The upper group contains the general functions. The functions COALESCE and NULLIF will only be visible if the version of the IBServer is 7.5 or higher. The middle group contains the date functions, available since version 6.0. This group will be unvisible

if the version of the IBServer is lower dan 6.0. The lower group contains the user defined functions (UDF). For the purpose of this example the sample UDF of Interbase is used. If there are no UDF's defined the lower group won't be visible.

The Keywords menu is divided in two groups. The upper group contains the keywords used in select statements. The keyword "case" will only be visible if the IBServer version is 7.5 or higher.
The lower group contains the statements for insert, update and delete. They will be explained later.

The Fields listbox has a popupmenu associated to select or deselect all fields. Drag and drop is available for both the Tables listbox and the Fields listbox.

How it works.

Of course you will still have to compose the SQL statement yourself. But IBConsole will help you as much as possible. Using the new menu options and listboxes will not only reduce the chance of typematic errors, but will also reduce the amount of keyboard input.
By selecting a menu option (function or keyword) the text will be inserted in the SQL-statement at the current cursor position. Some options simply insert the text, others are more sophisticated. When you select a function the field that is currently selected (if any) will also be inserted in place. So it is a good practice to select the table and the fields you want to use before you select a menu option. All tablenames and fieldnames will be formatted according to the SQL-dialect of the database.
Tablenames and fieldnames can be inserted in the SQL-statement by doubleclicking them. You can also drag them into the SQL-statement. When you drag multiple fieldnames in the SQL-statement they will be – of course – seperated with commas.
IBConsole also assigns an alias to each tablename and uses this alias on each fieldname. This might seem useless when you use only one table – it is indeed – but it is harmless and makes live a lot easier when you use multiple tables.

A summary of sophisticated options:
● All functions take the currently selected fieldname as parameter.
● The "select" keyword add the currently selected fields
● The "from" and "join" keyword add the currently selected tablename.
● The "group by" and "order by" keyword add the currently selected fields.
● The "where" and "having" keyword add the first selected field.

The "insert into", "update" and "delete" options will build the SQL-statement for you based on the selected table and fields.

Gelein van de Voorde,
Member IBConsole team.