
Subject: Re: Looking for IDL code to read Excel spreadsheet

Posted by [mperrin+news](#) on Thu, 12 Jul 2001 01:57:14 GMT

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Med Bennett <mbennett@indra.com> wrote:

- > I use data from Excel all the time, but I always export them to a .CSV (commas
- > separate values) format first. Then they can be read into IDL easily.
- > Alternatively, you could study one of the files with a hex editor to figure out
- > where the data that you want actually starts and how the files are structured, and
- > then use binary reads. Good luck -

Don't even think about trying to do it in binary - .xls files, like .doc and the rest of the MS Office file formats, are in an extremely complicated format called DocFile, which basically is an entire file-system-in-a-file, complete with FAT tables, directory structures, and balanced red-black trees wrapped around all the actual spreadsheet data. You **don't** want to have to write a parser for that mess in IDL. Stick with the CSV export - fast and easy.

- Marshall
