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

Posted by [Rick Towler](#) on Tue, 10 Jul 2001 21:39:23 GMT

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Unless someone comes up with some code to read .xls files I think your best bet would be writing a VBA script within excel to export all of your files to ASCII. Visual Basic for Applications ships with all Office products back at least to Office 95 and is an excellent tool for this sort of problem. A few tips: the help files are not installed by default. Get that office CD out and install them. If your VB skills are weak, use the macro recorder to learn how to do things. When you record a macro, VB code is generated. Go back and examine the code for insight into VBA for excel.

The way I see this working is that you have an excel worksheet where the first column holds the list of files you need to process. Write your VB macro so that it loops thru these files, opening the .xls file, exporting it as an ASCII file, then closing it. It should be fairly straight forward.

Good luck!

-Rick Towler

"John McFee" <jmcfee@dres.dnd.ca> wrote in message
news:994780527.158211@coyote...

>

> I have a large number of Excel spreadsheet sheets. They are in a very simple format.

> There is a 1-line four column header, followed by four columns of numbers, eg:

>

> Time Concentration Time2 Response

> 14:48:20 19.29 14:42:01 1.5

> 14:48:25 5.34 14:42:06 0.7

> ...etc.

>

> I want to read in the numbers for processing in IDL. I could, within Excel,

> export the data to an ascii file, but there are a LOT of files to do. Is there

> an IDL routine that will read a simple Excel spreadsheet like this? (To make

> matters worse, I run IDL on a Sun Sparcstation.)

>

> I apologize if this has been covered in the newsgroup and I've missed it, but I

> have looked in various FAQs and through the various IDL libraries and archives

> on the Web and have found nothing so far.
>
> Thanks
>
> John McFee
>
> --
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Subject: Re: Looking for IDL code to read Excel spreadsheet
Posted by [Med Bennett](#) on Wed, 11 Jul 2001 13:40:34 GMT
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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 -

John McFee wrote:

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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:

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> 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

Subject: Re: Looking for IDL code to read Excel spreadsheet
Posted by [jmcfee](#) on Thu, 12 Jul 2001 18:03:47 GMT
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<[9ij05q\\$2j68\\$1@agate.berkeley.edu](mailto:9ij05q$2j68$1@agate.berkeley.edu)>
Organization: Defence Research Establishment Suffield
Keywords:

Thanks to everyone for their help. I'll export as .csv files. The less fooling around with MicroSoft, the better!

John McFee

In article <9ij05q\$2j68\$1@agate.berkeley.edu>,
mperrin+news@arkham.berkeley.edu (Marshall Perrin) writes:

```
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```

Subject: Re: Looking for IDL code to read Excel spreadsheet
Posted by [gogosgogos](#) on Fri, 13 Jul 2001 17:58:22 GMT
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what about running an odbc query on dataminer and quering excel?
should be fairly easy from the pc, but from the sun,
u might need some cross-platform odbc drivers, brrrrr....

i would just stick to a batch generation of csv data, quick and dirty,

but so what ???

cheers!
