



ASearch06: AppleSearch and XTND

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When AppleSearch is indexing data, if the file is a text file, it will import it directly. For files that are formatted, however, it uses the XTND technology to import the data. This has the advantage of allowing AppleSearch to be extended easily to support new data types, but also creates some potential reliability issues that need to be considered.

Supported file formats

AppleSearch 1.0 ships with an XTND that supports the following file formats. The formats are all supported by the MacLinkPlus XTND that ships with AppleSearch: MacWrite v4.5, v5.0 and vII; Word Perfect v1.0, v2.0, v2.1 (Mac); MS Word v3, v4, v5, v5.1 (Mac); MS Works WP v2.0 & v3.0; FrameMaker MIF v2.0, v3.0; PageMaker 4.0; Ragtime 3.1; AppleWorks; WriteNow v2, v3; Nisus v3; PICT (only text extraction); EXCEL (tab text - no formula); MS Word for Windows - 1.0, 2.0; and WordPerfect for Windows - 5.1.

To support additional formats, DataViz has an XTND that supplements AppleSearch 1.0 and supports the following formats: Macintosh Word Processing; FrameMaker MIF - 2.0, 3.0; Nisus - 3.0; MacWrite - 4.5, 5.0; MacWrite II; MS Word Mac - 3.0, 4.0, 5.0, 5.1; MS Works WP Mac - 2.0, 3.0; PICT (text extraction); Ragtime - 3.1; Rich Text RTF; WordPerfect Mac - 1.0, 2.0, 2.1; WriteNow - 2.0, 3.0; AppleWorks WP - 2.0, 3.0, GS.

It also supports importing the following DOS formats: AmiPro - 1.0, 2.0; DCA-RFT; MS Word DOS - 5.5; MS Word for Windows - 1.0, 2.0; MS Works WP DOS; MS Works WP Windows; Multimate; Multimate 4; OfficeWriter - 5.0, 6.0; Professional Write; WordPerfect DOS - 4.2, 5.0, 5.1; WordPerfect for Windows - 5.1; WordStar 3.4, 5.5, - 7.0; XYWrite III. The following spreadsheet formats are available as tabbed text as well: AppleWorks SS; Excel - 2.2, 3.0, 4.0; Lotus - WKS, WK1; MS Works SS Mac - 2.0, 3.0; MS Works SS DOS; MS Works SS Windows; SYLK. To get the XTND that supports these additional formats, please contact DataViz for pricing and availability.

XTND warnings

If you're planning on installing your own XTNDs into AppleSearch, there are a couple of potential problems you need to be aware of.

First, we've found that some publicly available XTNDs have bugs or memory management problems that might not show up under casual use, but under the heavy use AppleSearch makes of XTND can cause server failures. An XTND used by a word processor to import a file that leaves a memory pointer allocated doesn't usually cause a problem, but that same XTND being used to import 1,500 files can significantly fragment memory and cause the server to fail. If you install your own XTNDs and start having server reliability problems, you should remove them and test them individually for problems.

Also, the XTND protocol allows one XTND to define itself as the XTND that attempts to translate any unknown formats. The XTND shipped with AppleSearch is one of these, so if you install your own default XTND, AppleSearch will give priority to its own and your XTND will never get called.

Please note that not all XTNDs will work under AppleSearch. AppleSearch requires that the XTNDs do text extraction, not format conversion. We have found, for instance, that the ClarisWorks XTND will not function under AppleSearch.