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Connection Kit for Macintosh 2.0:Export Application Data (6/95)

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TOPIC -----

I would like to download data from a Macintosh database to my MessagePad. The Connection Kit for Macintosh 2.0 does not have a built-in translator for my application. I understand I need to export the application data in a delimited ASCII (text) file, but I'm unsure how to do this.

DISCUSSION -----

The data export process will vary from application to application. In general terms, you can follow the guidelines below to export your data in an delimited text file. For specific information on how to export data from an application, always consult the manual or contact the developer of the application for information. After the data is exported, you will need to import it into a Newton Connection Kit template you create.

Overview

Database information can be defined in general terms by Fields and Records. Groups of fields often compose a single record. A business card can be used to visualize fields and records. The individual pieces of information on the business card such as First Name, Last Name, Company, Address, City, State, Phone Number can be viewed as fields. The entire business card with all of the information on it can be viewed as a record. A group of business cards in a rolodex can be viewed as multiple records in a database.

Export Process

To begin the export process, choose the command to export data in the database or contact manager. In most cases, you will then need to choose the export file type. A Tab or Comma Separated ASCII Text format will work well with the Connection Kit. The Tab or Comma character is used to separate the data fields and is known as a delimiter. Any other ASCII character can also be used as a delimiter to separate the data into distinct fields.

After selecting the export format file type, the application may ask you to select the data fields to export and to indicate an export order, or it may just export the data in the order it is currently in. Applications will vary on the amount of control you have to export the data. Again, for specific information on how to export data from an application, always consult the manual or contact the developer of the application for information.

In general terms, what happens next is the application goes to the first record in the database, takes all information in the first field (for example First Name) and copies it to the text file. The application then enters a delimiter into the text document, goes back to the first record, copies the data in the second field (for example Last Name), and places this data back into the text file AFTER the delimiter. This cycle repeats itself until all of the field data in the first record is placed in the text file. After the first record has been exported, many applications will place a carriage return between it and all subsequent records until all records are exported. Any other ASCII character can also be used as a delimiter to separate the data into distinct records.

Export Example:

An example of how a contact database with the fields first name, last name, address, city, state, zip and phone number would look after exported in a tab delimited text (tab separated) format.

Record 1:

John (tab) Doe (tab) 1200 West Orion (tab) Anytown (tab) Texas (tab) 78456 (tab)
213-555-9999 (carriage return)

Record 2:

Joanne (tab) Doe (tab) 1200 East Big Dipper (tab) Some-town (tab) Texas (tab)
78346 (tab) 213-555-1212 (carriage return)

Once the data has been exported into the delimited text file, the file is ready to be imported into the Connection Kit via a template you create.

For information on how to create a template in the Connection Kit, see the following TIL article: "Connection Kit for Macintosh 2.0: Create Import Template"

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