

## Re: Lost columns in formatted text (space delimited) save

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*Source:*

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Excel/microsoft.public.excel.worksheet.functions/2008-03/msg01469.html>

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- *From:* Jeff Clark <[JeffClark@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:JeffClark@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Mon, 17 Mar 2008 08:59:03 -0700
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Dave Petersons note about the display settings made me look at those settings in the display/advanced settings. The desktop was set to 125 dpi (large) while the laptop setting was normal. Changed the desktop to normal 96 dpi, rebooted and evreything is back to where it should be on the column widths.

I upgraded to a 20" monitor in November and since I am old and blind I chanfged the setting so that evrything would be bigger.

Thanks for the help, Jeff

"Dave Peterson" wrote:

I don't have any more guesses.

But I wouldn't rely on the columnwidths to define the width of each field. I'd use some other technique.

Saved from a previous post:

There's a limit of 240 characters per line when you save as .prn files. So if your data wouldn't create a record that was longer than 240 characters, you can save the file as .prn.

I like to use a fixed width font (courier new) and adjust the column widths manually. But this can take a while to get it perfect. (Save it, check the output in a text editor, back to excel, adjust, save, and recheck in that text editor. Lather, rinse, and repeat!)

Alternatively, you could concatenate the cell values into another column:

```
=LEFT(A1&REPT(" ",5),5) & LEFT(B1&REPT(" ",4),4) & TEXT(C1,"000,000.00")
```

(You'll have to modify it to match what you want.)

Drag it down the column to get all that fixed width stuff.

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Then I'd copy and paste to notepad and save from there. Once I figured out that ugly formula, I kept it and just unhide that column when I wanted to export the data.

If that doesn't work for you, maybe you could do it with a macro.

Here's a link that provides a macro:

<http://google.com/groups?threadm=015b01c32c5f%24b3d398d0%24a501280a%40phx.gbl>

Dave Clark wrote:

My Dear Dave Peterson --

I heard of this thread and since this particular issue has been an occasional thorn in my side for quite some time, I thought I would take a few moments and expand on exactly what this problem is.

We have an elderly DOS-era application, which expects to be fed input data which is constructed in a fixed-columnar layout. Originally this was being done with simple text editors. But for a great many reasons, today we prefer to have the users prepare their data in Excel instead, and then use the "Save As (Formatted Text, space delimited)" process to export the data from excel into a text file, that the application can pick up.

To support this process, we have prepared a standard Excel template file, to be used for this purpose. One key point we make in the instructions, is for the users to NOT change any of the column widths of the data, since of course

that would modify the resultant output layout and cause the destination application to have fits.

In the main this process seems to work fine. But an occasional user, such as Jeff Clark who started this thread, finds that the resultant text file which they export, has had the columns "scrunched together", with each data column exactly one space less than the original design intent. We have been unable to identify what the cause or setting is that is resulting in this behavior. And it seems not to be a function of the excel file itself. Jeff can take a copy of one of my files and export it to formatted text on his machine, and what he gets out is scrunched, whereas what I got from that file on Excel on my machine is not scrunched. And conversely, I can take a file from Jeff and put it on my machine and it exports properly on mine even though it does not on his.

The only "symptom" we have been able to identify, is that when examined in Excel on one of these troublesome Excel installations, that each data column appears as 0.11 narrower than they appear as on the majority of other machines, where the export works as expected.

This problem does not appear to be a function of any particular excel version -- we have encountered this problem occasionally with Office 97

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users, ditto for Office 2000, and now here's Jeff Clark using Office 2003 and experiencing exactly this same phenomenon.

This has been going on long enough that I can hazard a statistical estimate, which appears to be that something like one out of every 15–20 users runs into this goofy problem. So it's not a common situation. The majority of folks find this process works just fine.

But when this does crop up, it's annoying as the dickens, and we have no clue what to do, other than suggest such users try exporting from somebody else's machine, which typically does work OK.

If anyone can point us to exactly what is going on with this, and help us figure out what the root cause is, that would be wonderful.

Thanx in advance for any insights that y'all can give.

Dave Clark.

—

Dave Peterson