

## Re: data source with 508 fields

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*Source:*

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Word/microsoft.public.word.mailmerge.fields/2007-01/msg00062.html>

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- *From:* "Christoph Arnold" <[arnold@xxxxxxxx](mailto:arnold@xxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Fri, 5 Jan 2007 15:20:26 +0100
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Can be opened without problems in: Notepad, Wordpad, Word 2000!  
The described problems are only when opening the file in Word 2003 and 2007.  
(I've tested only with these 5 Programs. The problem can always be reproduced with this textfile, it's not only sometimes, it's always when opening with Word 2003/2007)

Christoph Arnold

"Doug Robbins – Word MVP" <[dkr@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:dkr@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)> schrieb im Newsbeitrag [news:%23jDosLNMHHA.4916@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:%23jDosLNMHHA.4916@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

Can you open the file in Notepad? If not, it may be corrupt in some way.

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Hope this helps.

Please reply to the newsgroup unless you wish to avail yourself of my services on a paid consulting basis.

Doug Robbins – Word MVP

"Christoph Arnold" <[arnold@xxxxxxxx](mailto:arnold@xxxxxxxx)> wrote in message [news:eCT%23zvMMHHA.780@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:eCT%23zvMMHHA.780@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

Thanks for the info. Word 2003/2007 seems to do/search something when opening files that look like datasources (after the text converter). When opening just the file (with or without the confirm conversion dialog), the file is always displayed but then after a second word hangs/cursor stands still/no response.

Christoph Arnold

"Peter Jamieson" <[pjj@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:pjj@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)> schrieb im Newsbeitrag [news:%23NXe0AMMHHA.4196@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:%23NXe0AMMHHA.4196@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

Rading your message again, I think the problem is that the data source

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is attached to your .dot file.

The problem is that in Word 2002/2003, Word seems to try to open the file twice – once when it opens the .dot with the data source connected, and once when it opens the .doc that is created from the .dot. However, when it tries to open the file attached to the .doc, it is already open exclusively and Word cannot open it again. This was not the behaviour in Word 2000.

You should be able to test that by disconnecting the data source from the .dot and only connecting it in the .doc. Unfortunately what that usually means is that you have to write an AutoNew macro (or something like that) to open the data source whenever a new .doc is created from the .dot.

The thing about the 255 field limit is that it does depend on the data source, but it also depends on the way that Word tries to connect to the data source. In the case of text (csv) type files, Word has three mechanisms:

- a. its internal text converter
- b. ODBC
- c. OLEDB (the default in Word 2002/2003)

As far as I know, (b) and (c) will limit you to at most 255 fields. (a) allows more columns, but since there is no specification of the maximum we are basically at the mercy of what Microsoft decides to do in future. Further, when you open a text file as a data source, you may have to force Word to use (a) (again, checking Tools|Options|General|"Confirm conversion at open" is the only way to do this in the User Interface.

One thing that has certainly changed over the years is the text converter tries to check the character encoding of the file. If it is

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"not sure", it may pop up an additional dialog box. As far as I know, Word uses a set of heuristics to do this (because nothing in the file explicitly defines the character set being used, and I have certainly heard reports that large numbers of fields or large field contents can trigger display of this dialog box. All you can really do is see what happens on your system(s) and deal with the problem if it occurs.

Peter Jamieson

"Christoph Arnold" <arnold@xxxxxxxx> wrote in message [news:e19AEbLMHHA.1248@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:e19AEbLMHHA.1248@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

Thanks for your quick response!

- I tried with confirm conversion -> word opens it as a normal textfile.
- Disabling the virus checker didn't change the behaviour.
- When we reported it to MS (two weeks ago), we were told that we can't have more than 256 fields as a datasource for mailmerge, but this week we saw (on <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/294688/de>) that it should be possible to use more fields (we reported this - and the fact that opening just the file fails - again, but still waiting for a response...)

Christoph Arnold

"Peter Jamieson"  
<pjj@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>  
schrieb im  
Newsbeitrag  
[news:upXFd9KMHHA.2140@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:upXFd9KMHHA.2140@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

I would try the following:  
a. check Word  
Tools|Options|General|"Confirm  
conversion at open" and

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try opening the file again.  
Please note what format  
Word thinks it is  
trying to open  
b. if you have a virus  
checker enabled and are in a  
position to  
disable it temporarily, try  
doing that then opening the  
file.

If necessary report the  
problem to Microsoft  
through their support  
incident mechanism (on  
their website) if you cannot  
get it to work  
(other people here may offer  
suggestions, but we are just  
volunteers).

Peter Jamieson  
"Christoph Arnold"  
<arnold@xxxxxxxx> wrote  
in message  
[news:e44BvjKMHHA.320@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:e44BvjKMHHA.320@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

I'm trying to  
use a  
textfile  
(with 508  
fields) as a  
datasource  
for  
mailmerge.

In Word  
2000 this  
file works,  
but the  
same file  
used in  
Word  
2003/2007  
doesn't  
work (the  
dot, that  
uses this  
file as a  
datasource  
is loaded

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and shown  
in word,  
then word  
hangs /  
cursor  
stands still /  
no reaction  
on  
keyboard/mouse  
)

The same  
happens,  
when I open  
just the  
textfile with  
word! No  
problem  
with Word  
2000,  
Wordpad,  
Notepad...  
but hangs  
when  
opened with  
Word  
2003/2007.

Thanks for  
any help!

Christoph  
Arnold

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