A Visual Step-by-step Approach to Converting an RTF File to an Excel File

Kirk Paul Lafler, @sasNerd, Spring Valley, California

Abstract

Rich Text Format (RTF) files incorporate basic typographical styling and word processing features in a standardized document that many programs and applications are able to read. In today's high-tech arena sometimes the contents of an RTF file needs to be viewed as, and even converted to, an Excel file. You would think that since both RTF and Excel are Microsoft standards that this would be a simple process to achieve, but you may be surprised to find out that is not the case. Learn about several "free" web-based and online applications as well as traditional SAS®-based programming techniques that can be used to convert an RTF file to an Excel file.

Introduction

A file's format determines what you can do with it and which programs can open it. Essentially a file's format is composed of its own language where the format is understood by a specific application and/or platform. In today's vast dialect of file formats, technology offers users with an assortment of different file formats to use and choose from. Popular file formats include PDF, HTML, RTF, Word, CSV, Excel, image formats like JPG and PNG, video formats like AVI and MOV, and audio formats like MP3 and MP4, to name a few. The popularity and variety of file format provides users with unique and powerful capabilities, but can also make sharing between one software vendor's file format and another file format more complicated. This paper highlights several "free" online web-based conversion tools, as well as SAS-based programming techniques, for converting an RTF file to an Excel file.

Exploring Rich Text Format (RTF) Files

Rich Text Format (RTF) files were first developed by Microsoft in 1987. RTF lets users exchange text files between different word processors in different operating systems. Saving files in RTF ensures that documents can be opened regardless of the type of word processor being used. When saving an RTF file, it's processed by an RTF writer that converts the word processor's markup to the RTF language; and when reading an RTF file, the RTF reader converts the RTF language into the word processor format that will display the document.

Exploring Excel (XLSX) Files

The Excel (XLSX) extension is an open source XML-based filename format developed by Microsoft in 2005 for Office Excel 2007 SP2 and above. XLSX files can be opened and edited with Excel (version 2007 and above), Google Sheets, Zoho Docs, Kingsoft Spreadsheets, OpenOffice Calc, and other software.

Converting RTF Files to Excel (XLSX) Files

I'll show you several "free" online conversion websites that are adept at converting RTF files (and other extensions) to XLSX files (and other extensions), shown below. The bonus associated with using these web-based tools is that you won't be inundated with unwanted adware (or advertisements).



Using Watermark-Images.com to Convert RTF (or Word) Files to Excel Files

The "free" online converter offered by Watermark-Images.com provides users with not only a very "friendly" user interface, but makes converting an RTF file to an Excel file as easy as 1-2-3. The Watermark-Images.com online app is shown below.

Y Watermark-Images	Hanne / Males Tubatale - Blog Contact	•
Watermark Imagen		
Watermark Pdf		
Dwg to JPG	Convert WORD to EXCEL doc to xls	
Dwg ti Put	CONVERTIONED TO EXCEL 400 TO XIS	
Convert WORD to EXCEL		
PSD to JPG	Step 1: Select MS Word File (.doc or. docx)	
Mp3 Tag Editor	Part of Destrolation and Andrew Control on A	
TGA to JPG		
EPUB to PDF	Select DOC File moments 05-21-2018.docx 14	
Easter in PDF	Marco and a second s	
RYE to POF	Try Step 2: Select Output Excel settings	
SVG to PNG	- 77	
TEF BLACE	Water Date	
EPS-MUPO		
CR210JR0	C Step 3: Convert to Excel	
NCE to JPG	Ger a convento Excer	
PSD to PDF		
XCEN-IPG	Convert to XLS Envirised EXCEL File	
005 tu Xe.8	Contract and the second of the second	
Convert EXCEL to WORD	Convert Word (doc, docx) to Excel (xis, xisx) free	
XML to CSV		i i

Converting an RTF (or Word) file to an Excel file with Watermark-Images.com is accomplished in three easy steps.

- 1. Click the "Select DOC File" button and navigate to the location of the desired RTF (or Word) file.
- 2. Click either the "xlsx" or "xls" radio button for the version of Excel file you want to create.
- 3. Click the "Convert to XLS" button to initiate the conversion process and download the converted Excel file to your download location.

Using CoolUtils.com to Convert RTF (or Word) Files to Excel Files

The "free" online converter offered by CoolUtils.com provides users with not only a very "friendly" user interface, but makes converting an RTF file to an Excel file as easy as 1-2-3. The CoolUtils.com online app is shown below.

file converter		Products	Customization	Suppo
DOC to XLS - Free Onli	ne Convertar			
Upload DOC file	to convert			
Select files				
moments.rtf is read	ly to convert			
Allowed file types: doc, d	ecx, docm, wbk, wps, dot, dotx, rtf, rvf, odt, s	aw, abw, tot		
Set convert opti	ons			
2				
Convert to	Options			
2				
Convert to + PDF	Options			
Convert to • PDF	Options			
Convert to + PDF Excel + HTML	Options			
Convert to + PDF • Excel + HTML + JPEG	Options			
Convert to + PDF + Excel + HTML + JPEG + Text	Options - Header & Footer			

Converting an RTF (or Word) file to an Excel file with CoolUtils.com is accomplished in three easy steps.

- 1. Click the "Select files..." button and navigate to the location of the desired RTF (or Word) file.
- 2. Click the "Excel" radio box from the list of filetypes to set the conversion option along with the type of file you want to create.
- 3. Click the "Download Converted File" button to initiate the conversion process and download the converted Excel file to your download folder.

Using Convertio.co to Convert RTF (or Word) Files to Excel Files

The "free" online converter offered by Convertio.co provides a very "friendly" user interface and makes converting an RTF file to an Excel file easy and quick. The Convertio.co online app is shown below.

		RTF to XLSX (E	XCEL) Conver	ter
Dotur	nen Cariene.		and the second	Convertion (TPP) In Conversed
	From Computer	1 🗢 🖉	RTF	to XLSX -
	and the second	Hanne Sende		
		22002	rivert rtf to xisi	
	Lobad of Fisco	How to co	rwert tif to xisa real In Tootsar	Developed your size
Install Convertio Chrome Extension?		How to co	2944	eren Denerhaat ynwr stas Laryne twy pool fer gloernau ydar en bergynatheniau

Converting an RTF (or Word) file to an Excel file with Convertio.co is accomplished in three easy steps.

- 1. Click the "Upload RTF file(s)" button and navigate to the location of the desired RTF (or Word) file.
- 2. Click the "to XLSX" radio box from the list of filetypes to set the conversion option along with the type of file you want to create.
- 3. Click the "Download your XLSX" file button to initiate the conversion process and download the converted Excel file to your download folder.

Using FileZigZag.com to Convert RTF (or Word) Files to Excel Files

The "free" online converter offered by FileZigZag.com provides a very "friendly" user interface and makes converting an RTF file to an Excel file easy and quick. The Convertio.co online app is shown below.

	Convert File	Advanced Converter	Send File	File Formats	Blog	API	FAQ	
ee online file conve	erter							
upport a numerous number of	of media file format	ts, converting files is simple and	l easy with us, in	just 4 simple steps y	ou can conv	ert any file	e you have. Select your file an	nd start
enting								
	des barrer 1							
ra a hea ordine tool converte	r that allows you b	o convert video, audio, image ar phones	nit document Re	to different formats	w@iout.the i	need to kno	stall any program Filezigzag i	6
ra a hea ordine tool converte	r that allows you b	o convert video, audio, image ar phones	nit document file	to different formats	without the o	need to ins	stal any program Filezigzag i	a.
ra a tree online tool converte	r that allows you b weeks and mobile	o convert video, sudio, image ar phones	nd document life	to different formula	without the e	head to ins	-	b.
rs a tree online tool converte letely comparible with all two	r Bat allows you b users and mobile	o convert video, audio, image ar phones	nd document file	to different formate Email addre		need to ins	-	

Converting an RTF (or Word) file to an Excel file with FileZigZag.com is accomplished in four easy steps.

- 1. Drag & Drop your RTF file, or Click the "Select" button and navigate to the location of the desired RTF file.
- 2. Click the "Convert to" selection box from the list of filetypes to set the conversion option along with the type of file you want to create.
- 3. Enter your Email address.
- 4. Click the "Convert" button to initiate the conversion process and download the converted Excel file to your download folder.

Using Traditional SAS Programming Methods to Convert RTF Files to Excel Files

A final approach often used by SAS users to convert an RTF file to an Excel file is provided below.

- 1. Use MS-Word to open an existing RTF file.
- 2. Click "File" and select "Save As" then select type "Plain Text".
- 3. In the File Conversion Dialog window, select "Windows (Default)" for the Text Encoding and also select "CR / LF" for insert line breaks.
- 4. Assign and save "Plain Text" with a file name.
- 5. Using SAS software, import the "Plain Text" file to create a SAS dataset.
- 6. As necessary, modify dataset structure using PROC SORT, Arrays, DATA step Merge, PROC SQL joins, PROC TRANSPOSE, metadata, Hash objects, etc.
- 7. Use the ODS Excel destination to save contents of SAS dataset / output / results to an Excel file.
- 8. Open and verify the successful conversion of the RTF file to an Excel file.

Conclusion

Because of the abundance of file formats being used by different software applications and platforms, SAS users are often faced with the need to convert one file format to another. This paper highlights several web-based approaches along with step-by-step instructions to help SAS users convert an RTF file to an Excel file without the need to write SAS programs and/or process data sets. The ability to accomplish this becomes particularly important for reducing processing requirements as the size of input SAS data sets or the input data sources grow in size.

Acknowledgments

The author thanks the 2020 South East SAS Users Group (SESUG) e-Posters Section Chairs, Shane Rosanbalm and Abbas Tavikoli, for accepting my abstract and paper; Richann Watson, SESUG 2020 Academic Program Chair; Lesa Caves, SESUG 2020 Operations Chair; the SESUG Conference Committee; and SAS Institute for organizing and supporting a great virtual conference!

Trademarks Citations

SAS and all other SAS Institute Inc. product or service names are registered trademarks or trademarks of SAS Institute Inc. in the USA and other countries. [®] indicates USA registration. Other brand and product names are trademarks of their respective companies.

Author Information

Kirk Paul Lafler is an entrepreneur, consultant, educator and author, and has used SAS software since 1979. Currently, Kirk works at San Diego State University as a lecturer and adjunct professor; at the University of California San Diego Extension as an advisor and adjunct professor; and teaches SAS, SQL, Python and R courses, seminars, workshops and webinars to users around the world. As the author of PROC SQL: Beyond the Basics Using SAS, Third Edition (SAS Press. 2019), Google® Search Complete (Odyssey Press. 2014) and hundreds of SAS papers and articles; Kirk has served as an Invited speaker, educator, keynote and section leader at SAS user group conferences and meetings worldwide; and is the recipient of 25 "Best" contributed paper, hands-on workshop (HOW), and poster awards.

Comments and suggestions can be sent to:

Kirk Paul Lafler SAS® Consultant, Application Developer, Programmer, Data Analyst, Educator and Author E-mail: <u>KirkLafler@cs.com</u> LinkedIn: <u>https://www.linkedin.com/in/KirkPaulLafler/</u> LinkedIn: <u>https://www.linkedin.com/in/Order-of-Magnitude-Analytics/</u> Twitter: @sasNerd