Data Converter User Manual

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Introduction

Data Converter is a software tool custom designed for TimeService, Inc. We get a monthly accounting spreadsheet from Sears, the spreadsheet is modified by our accounting department, and certain data from the modified spreadsheet needs to be entered into our Retail Interact accounting system. Data Converter helps to collect the important data from the modified Sears spreadsheet and match values to account numbers so that the data can be entered more easily into the Retail Interact system.

Start with this (input file)...

And create this (output file).

Important Files

The Data Converter tool consists of the following files:

- **Data Converter** – Shortcut
  Double click this shortcut to run Data Converter.

- **Data Converter Manual** – Shortcut
  If you are reading this, you already know what it is!

- **Data Converter** – Folder
  Contains the source code, saved output, and configuration files.

  - **License and copying.txt** – Text file
    The GNU General Public License under which Data Converter is distributed.

  - **Data Converter Manual.pdf** – PDF file

  - **config** – Folder

    - **stores.csv** – Text file, can be edited in Excel
      List of owned and subcontracted departments. The current version of this file must always have the name "stores.csv".

    - **(backups of stores.csv)**

  - **io** – Folder
   Destination for output files. Data Converter automatically writes the output file to this folder, giving it a name like "SearsOutput2012-06-14-163030.csv", which is unique to the time it was generated. The contents of this folder may be deleted periodically.

  - **src** – Folder
    Contains the source code (the guts) of Data Converter. These files are vital to the operation of Data Converter and should not be modified. The desktop shortcut is a shortcut to "DataConverter.py" in this folder.

    - **DataConverter.py** – Executable Python source file

    - **DataConverterGUI.py** – Python source file

    - **DCExceptions.py** – Python source file

    - **Journal.py** – Python source file

    - **openInExcel.vbs** – Visual Basic script

   - **xlsToCsv.vbs** – Visual Basic script
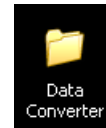
Get Data from Sears Monthly Spreadsheet

As its main function, Data Converter takes as input an Excel (.xls) file with specific columns of data (the modified Sears spreadsheet) and creates as output an Excel (.csv) file in the form of a set of journal entries with particular data from the input file. To run Data Converter, follow these steps.

1. Obtain the Sears monthly report.
2. Modify the file so it has the required columns listed in **Specifications for the Input File.**
3. Save it in a place you can find later.
2. Double-click the Data Converter icon. You should see two windows, as shown.
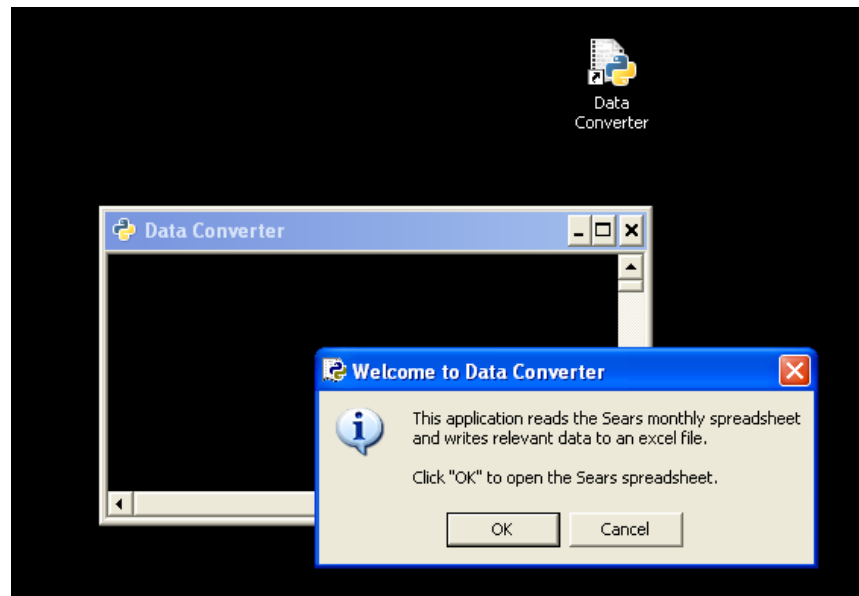
3. Click "OK" in the message window. This will open a file picker.
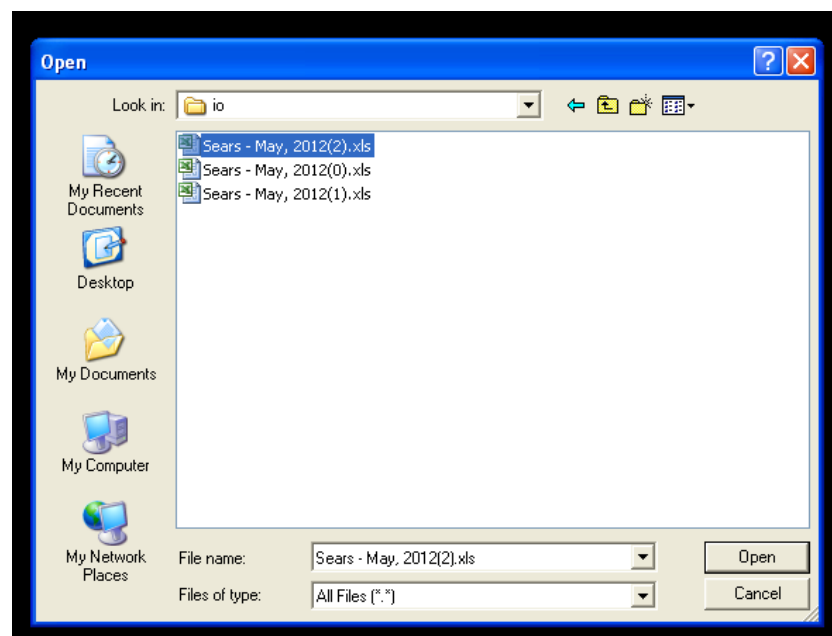
4. In the file picker, navigate to the modified Sears report that you saved in step 3, select it, and click "Open".
5. Wait a couple moments. If Data Converter is successful, you will see a message reporting success. If you see an error message, read the error message and do what it says to fix the error. See **Some Error Messages** for help interpreting error messages**.**
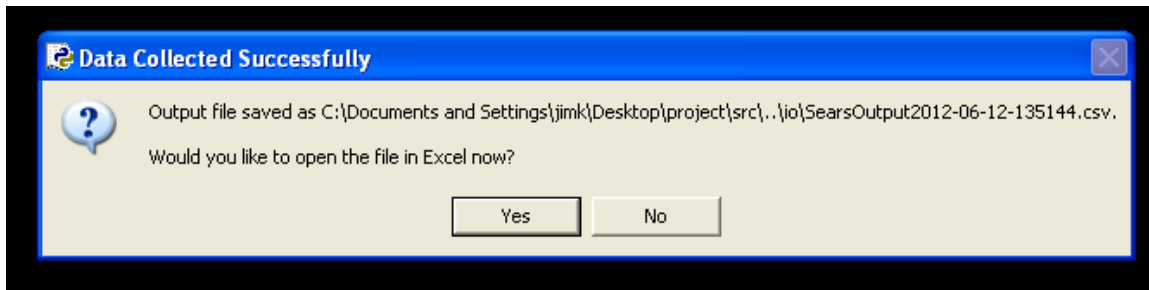
6. Click "Yes" to open the output file in Excel. If Excel is minimized, you may have to maximize Excel to see the file.
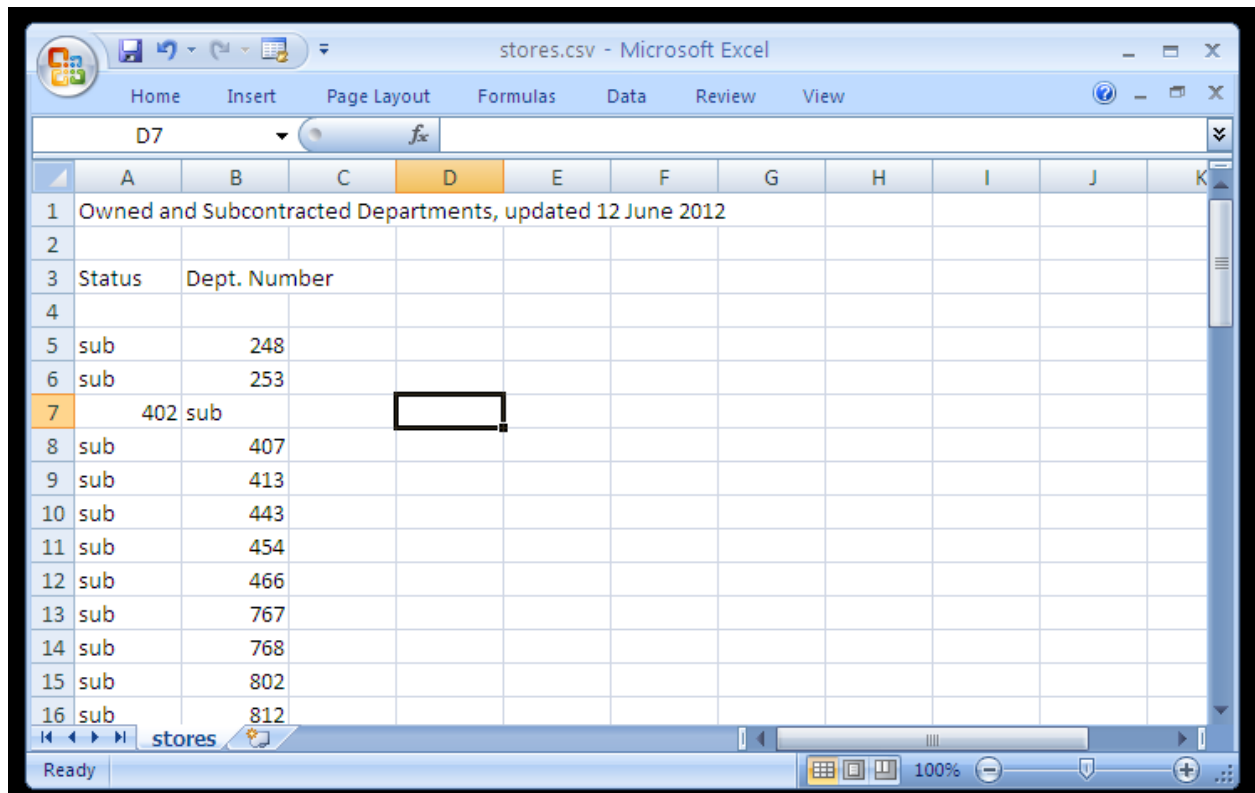7. Save and print if desired.

Some Error Messages

1. Department Number Error

Problem: There is a discrepancy between stores.csv and the department numbers that appear in the input file (modified Sears spreadsheet).

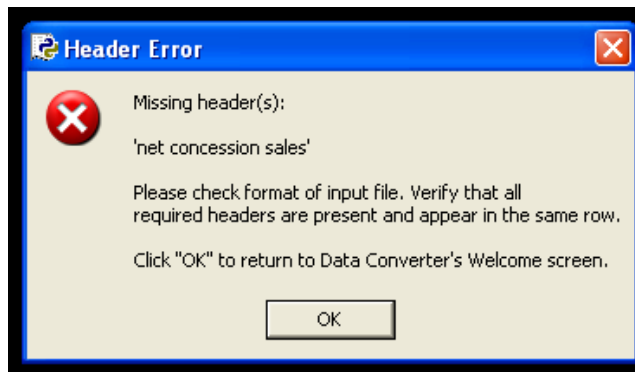**Solution:** Make sure that stores.csv is up-to-date and formatted correctly.

Example: In the example below, stores.csv has an improperly formatted entry that caused the error. The error can be corrected by swapping cells 7A and 7B. The same error could occur if the entry for department 402 were absent from stores.csv.

Some Error Messages (Continued)

2. Header Error

Problem: Required headers are not all present or are formatted incorrectly.

Solution: Make sure all required headers and their respective columns are present and that all headers are in the same row of the spreadsheet and are not in merged cells.

See also: **Specifications for the Input File**

Example: In this example, some header cells are merged with the cells above. The header "Net Concession Sales", though present, is not read correctly. The cells must be unmerged.

Specifications for the Input File

The input file (modified Sears spreadsheet) must be in a certain format for Data Converter to be able to read it properly. Make sure the input file meets the following specifications.

1. Input file must contain the following required columns:
   a. "TS Dept"
   b. "TS Sales"
   c. "Variance"
   d. "Sears Rent"
   e. "Over / Short"
   f. "Net Sales Tax"
   g. "Total Pay"
   h. "Net Concession Sales"
   i. "TS Com $"
   j. Note: In order to match a required column name, the column header must contain the text in the required column name. Matching is not case sensitive. For example, the column header "total pay received" is valid for the required column **g** ("Total Pay").
2. All column headers must be in the same row. Any column headers that are split into two rows or are on a different row from other headers may not be read correctly.

Example: Below is an example input file, with the required column headers highlighted. Note that all the column headers are in the same row (4).

Add or Remove Departments (owned or subcontractors)

Data Converter's output depends on which departments are subcontracted and which are owned. Data Converter keeps track of this information in a configuration file (.csv) that can be edited in Excel. When TimeService, Inc. opens a new department, closes a department, or changes the owned/subcontracted status of a department, the configuration file must change to keep Data Converter up to date. Follow these steps to change the configuration file.

1. See **Important Files** to find the file stores.csv.
1. Make a copy of stores.csv and rename the copy (e.g. stores-backup-6-12-12.csv).
2. Open stores.csv in Excel.
3. Edit the file.
   a. Change the date in the title to today's date.
   b. To add a new department: Type "sub" or "own" in the first cell of a new row. Type the department number in the second cell.
   c. To remove a department: Delete or clear both cells of the row on which the department's number appears.
   d. To change a department's status: Change "own" to "sub" or "sub" to "own" in the row on which the department's number appears.
   e. Note: Entries may appear in any order and the order may be changed at any time. Blank rows may also be added anywhere. Row numbers do not matter.
4. Save the file. If you get a dialog box asking if you want to keep the CSV format, say "Yes". The current stores file must be saved with the exact name "stores.csv", or "stores" if file extensions are hidden.
5. Try to run Data Converter. If there is an error in the new stores.csv, revert to the backup copy of stores.csv and try to make the change again.