

BrightSign Tech Note

Editing Comma Separated Files (CSV) with International Versions of Excel

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Summary

BrightSign always expects .CSV files to be separated by a comma: ',' even in regions where excel wouldn't use a comma by default.

BrightSign has a powerful mode whereby it can play a sophisticated sign that is described in a ".CSV" file. CSV stands for "comma separated values", and is a simple text file that contains a table of information. Using any csv editor, including Microsoft Excel, you can easily create a CSV file that describes a sophisticated interactive sign.

Regional settings on a Windows PC affect how .CSV files are generated and interpreted. In the UK and US, the List separator is a comma: ',' but in France and many other countries it is a semicolon: ';' and Excel uses this in parsing .CSV files. Therefore, .CSV files are not in fact comma separated in France, but semicolon separated! Different regions use different separators and it's not always obvious, e.g. Spanish (Spain) uses a semicolon: ';' but Galician uses a comma: ','.

Changing the List Separator in Excel

You can change the list separator in excel from a semicolon to a comma. This will allow Excel to output CSV files that are comma separated. In the example to the right, the decimal separator is a comma, and the list separator is a semicolon.

1. Go to the Control Panel Folder.
2. Open Regional and Language Settings and Language settings
3. Hit the Customise button.
4. Change the List Separator to a comma (,).

Note: Some users have reported that if the decimal separator and list separator conflict, the decimal separator takes precedence. In that case, change the Decimal Symbol from a comma (,) to a period (.).

If you do not want to change the regional settings for Excel, there are alternative spreadsheets and dedicated csv editors available.

Some CSV Editors:

- **Google Spreadsheet** – Export to CSV, Copy and paste results from web page into a text file.
- **CSVed** - Hosted at <http://csved.sjfrancke.nl/index.html>
- **KillinkCSV** - White Peak Software. Try this utility for free; purchase it for \$27. <http://www.whitepeaksoftware.com/killink-csv.aspx>

