

Questions and Answers

If You Encounter Problems...

Some of the common problems that result in questions asked of me are discussed here:

Netscape and SoundApp:

Q: I've configured Netscape to use SoundApp as the sound helper application. However, whenever Netscape launches SoundApp, it reports an end-of-file error and won't play the files. Why isn't it working?

A: The "file type" pop-up in Netscape's helper configuration pane is not set properly. "PLAY", which Netscape seems to default to, is a Play List. This setting will confuse SoundApp, since the file downloaded is not a Play List.

To setup Netscape to play Windows ".wav" files via SoundApp, to the following:

1. Open the "General Preferences" dialog and select the "Helpers" pane.
2. Edit the the following entry or create it if it doesn't already exist:
 - a. MIME Type: "audio/x-wav" and Suffixes: "wav".
 - b. Then under "Handled By" click the "Application:" radio button.
 - c. Click the "Browse..." button, find and select SoundApp.
 - d. Using the "File type:" pop-up menu, select "WAVE" for the File Type.
3. Repeat for the "audio/wav" MIME Type.

For other file formats, either edit an existing audio MIME type or create a new one for the desired type. Typically you'll receive an alert from Netscape telling you that it can't find an appropriate plug-in for a type. See the "Formats" section for likely suffixes, for example "au" for Sun Audio files.

Play Lists:

Q: Why do files on my file server disappear from my Play List when it is opened?

A: Many non-Apple file servers are written in such a way that aliases to files on them will not work. SoundApp uses aliases to store file locations and when it cannot find a file it removes it from the Play List. Many UNIX-based file servers will have this problem.

XM and IT:

Q: Why doesn't SoundApp support the XM and IT music module formats?

A: Because I don't have a music engine that can play them that I can include into SoundApp. At some point, I plan on writing one but, it will take a while to implement. When I do write my own, I expect to include support for 669 and a few other formats and probably eliminate the two drivers (Sound-Trecker and ZSS) that SoundApp presently uses.

Q: What about MacMikMod and MacMikIt?

A: Work on these applications has stopped because the original author (MikMak) no longer wishes to release his source code. The existing Mac ports are using very early versions and haven't been updated in quite a long time.

Q: What about Player Pro?

A: I have looked into Player Pro but, for technical reasons, it is not possible to incorporate it's music engine into SoundApp at this time.

MPEG:

Q: Why can't I play MPEG files?

A: SoundApp can only play MPEG files on PowerPC-based computers. Some 680x0-based Macintoshes may be able to play them, but I do not have one to develop the playback code on so I'm unable to implement this at this time.

Q: Why does SoundApp refuse to play some MPEG audio files but not most others?

A: SoundApp's MPEG engine may have some problems with some files depending upon their characteristics. If it can "Get Info" on them but not play them, then please let me know.

Q: Why can't I encode MPEG files?

A: SoundApp does not encode MPEG files. See <http://www.raum.com/mpeg/> for more information on encoding MPEGs on the Macintosh.

Conversion:

Q: Why can't my PC play WAVE files generated by SoundApp?

A: Most likely they are not being transferred to the PC correctly. Common problems are uploading the files in text mode or MacBinary format (which PCs cannot read) instead of in binary mode or forgetting the ".wav" suffix. Remember, PCs are still not very smart and require suffixes in order to access files properly.

Other Sound Formats:

Q: Why doesn't SoundApp support this special format, e.g. Akai or Roland samples?

A: I don't know anything about these formats and so I cannot implement support for them. Roland and Akai's formats are proprietary as are many Internet sound and voice mail formats. If you have information on any popular file formats that SoundApp does not currently support, please send me the details.

Sound Playback:

Q: Why do some files (especially MPEG Layer III) start to play then stop?

A: Your computer's processor or disk drive is too slow or overly busy. This can especially happen while accessing a CD-ROM under Mac OS 8 due to some changes apparently made in Mac OS 8.

Q: Why does the Status window's slider sometimes revert to a progress bar when playing files of certain types?

A: Not all file formats inherently support random access and SoundApp doesn't yet emulate this capability for those formats. File encodings that do not support random access are: MOD/S3M/MTM files using the ZSS driver, Amiga IFF Fibbonacci-delta compressed files, DVI ADPCM and any of the G72x compression formats.

AppleScript Ranges:

Q: Why does the start at and stop at AppleScript parameters work for some files and not others?

A: SoundApp doesn't support these parameters for stereo SoundEdit, non-block based compressed files (Fibbonacci-delta, G.72x, Huffman and DVI ADPCM), MOD/S3M/MTM and MIDI. Future versions may support some of the compressed types for conversion.