

Stringifier

An Important Note About Shareware

Shareware is the innovative 'try before you buy' software distribution method. I know it's easy to forget to pay for something after you have it, but please try to support the system that helps feed independent software developers. Reward us when we deliver a quality product! You may distribute Stringifier freely (with this documentation) as long as it is not done for profit! Posting it on a BBS that charges for connection time is ok, but distributing it on disk for profit is not.

Stringifier's shareware fee is a mere \$12 (US). If you intend to continue using Stringifier after a 'fair' trial period, please submit your payment to:

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In return you will receive the latest version of Stringifier and information on all our programs. Please specify what version you are currently running. If it is the latest version, you will receive the next version when it becomes available. You will also automatically be registered for future shareware versions of Stringifier without ever having to pay upgrade fees! Microsoft would never do that. You will also receive service via America Online electronic mail for quick answers to your questions and bug reporting. Upon receiving your shareware fee, you will be told what electronic mail address to use for this free service. To provide additional incentive for registering your copy of Stringifier, consider the enhancements planned for future versions discussed later.

Purpose of Stringifier

Anyone who has used ResEdit for putting string list (STR#) resources into their program or data files knows that ResEdit is definitely not a word processor. Sure, you can add strings, or cut & paste them, but face it - even the low budget word processors are easier and faster.

Stringifier is designed to let you import plain old text files into STR# resources. The strings in the text files can be separated (delimited) by a choice of characters such as carriage returns, tabs, etc. This allows you to manage your strings outside of ResEdit and simply import them into your program after making an update. For minor changes you can still use ResEdit.

I wrote this program to facilitate large string lists in another project of mine and decided that it was worth distributing based on how many programs I see out there in which the programmer has decided to keep strings in with the code instead of putting them into resources. This is a basic violation of separation of code and data which is almost as important as the separation of church and state in the USA. Apple thinks that ALL strings should be kept in resources to facilitate the translation of programs to other languages without the need for recompiling the source code.

Elements of Stringifier

When Stringifier is run, a dialog box will be opened (see figure one). The input file is the text file containing the strings to be copied to a STR# resource. The output file is a file to which the STR# resource will be added; the file can be an application or a document. If it has no resource fork, one

will be created. The input and output files are selected from the File Menu. The name of the STR# resource can be typed into the dialog box or it can have no name. The radio buttons choose whether a random unique ID should be generated for your new STR# resource or a specific ID should be assigned which you designate in the box next to the bottom radio button.

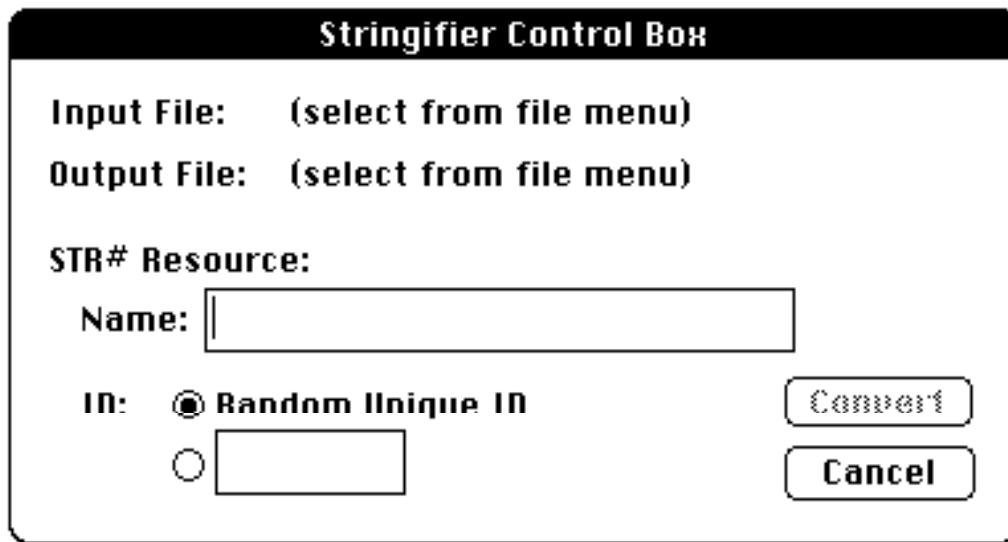
The image shows a dialog box titled "Stringifier Control Box". It contains the following elements: "Input File: (select from file menu)", "Output File: (select from file menu)", "STR# Resource:" section with a "Name:" label and an empty text box, "ID:" section with two radio buttons. The first radio button is selected and labeled "Random Unique ID". The second radio button is unselected and has an empty text box next to it. On the right side, there are two buttons: "Convert" and "Cancel". The "Convert" button is dimmed.

Figure 1: Stringifier's Dialog Box

The "Convert" button does the STRingifying. However, "Convert" is dimmed (disabled) until both an input and an output file have been specified. If the bottom radio button is selected, a number must be typed into the adjacent box for the "Convert" button to become enabled. Pressing 'Convert' creates the STR# resource in the output file and puts the strings from the input file into the resource. Pressing the 'Convert' button is equivalent to selecting 'Convert' from the File menu. Pressing the 'Cancel' button quits Stringifier and is equivalent to selecting 'Quit' from the File menu.

File Menu

Open Input File...

This command presents the standard file selection dialog, showing all files of type text. Files created with word processors must be saved as plain text.

Close Input File

This command closes the currently opened input file. A convert operation cannot be done until a new input file has been selected via the "Open" command. Close (or Quit) must be selected before another application can have access to the input file.

New Output File

The command presents the standard new file dialog, prompting the user for the title of the file to be created. If a file already exists with the name entered, the user is asked to confirm replacing the existing file.

Open Output File...

This command presents the standard file selection dialog, showing all files. The selected file

will be opened for adding the new STR# resource.

Close Output File

This command closes the current output file. Close (or Quit) must be selected before another application can have access to the output file.

Convert

This command creates the STR# resource in the output file and puts the strings from the input file into the resource. Selecting 'Convert' from the File menu is equivalent to pressing the 'Convert' button in the dialog box. Once done, the new resource cannot be "uncreated" with Stringifier. Use ResEdit to remove the resource from the file or replace the resource with one of the same number or name using Stringifier. Note: the convert comand is dimmed (disabled) until both an input file and an output file have been specified. If the bottom radio button in the dialog box is selected, a number must be typed into the adjacent box for the 'Convert' command to become enabled.

Quit

The Quit command exits the program and returns to the Finder. If Quit is selected while there are open files, they are closed before quitting. Selecting 'Quit' from the File menu is equivalent to pressing the 'Cancel' button in the dialog box.

Edit Menu

Undo, Cut, Copy, Paste, Clear

The edit menu is not used during Stringifier execution - all the commands are disabled. However, when using desk accessories or switching to another application, the edit menu is enabled and works as described in the documentation for whatever program is switched to.

Delimiter Menu

Carriage Return, Linefeed, Tab, Space, Comma

Select the character which separates the strings in the input file. Carriage return, tab, and comma are the most common but linefeed and space are also provided. Note: the number of strings in the STR# resource created is N+1, where N is the number of occurrences of the delimiter character in the input file.

Coming Enhancements To Stringifier

On-line Help

On-line help describing program operation guides you through using Stringifier.

Any Ascii Character

Yes, the mysterious "Ascii..." menu selection from the Delimiter menu will be enabled and allow you to specify any ASCII character to be the string delimiter. This allows all of the standard delimiters to be characters within the strings.

Resource To ASCII Text

The reverse conversion process will be added to the program. This will allow you to copy existing STR# resources to a text file, edit them with your favorite word processor, and then convert them back into the STR# resource.

MultiFinder Friendliness

Although Stringifier works under MultiFinder, it is not friendly to background tasks; it hogs up the idle time. A future version will share time with background processes for those of you on the cutting edge of computing.

Bug Fixes

It goes without saying that any bugs will be eliminated as soon as possible. Stringifier supports any Mac with the 128K ROMS (the Mac 512KE) or newer. It also runs under MultiFinder and under any screen depth (Mac II users).

Your Special Needs

Send in your ideas for enhancements and don't be surprised when they're incorporated into a new version.

Version History

0.67 - First Beta version distribution to testers.

1.0 - Initial production release