Quick View Plus and Netscape Navigator 2.0.X

This version of Quick View Plus includes support for viewing non-HTML files in Netscape Navigator 2.0 using Netscape's Plug-in API.

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This section assumes the reader has a working knowledge of Netscape Navigator 2.0, Helper Applications and the Internet in general.

Plug-Ins versus Helper Applications in Netscape

A Helper Application is an external application that the user can instruct Netscape to invoke when it encounters a file it cannot normally view. Quick View Plus has always had the ability to function as a helper application within Netscape, and that ability is retained in ver. 3.0.3. The advent of the plug-in architecture in Netscape 2.0, however, allows Quick View Plus to provide another, more seamless way to integrate its viewers within Netscape.

A plug-in is an object that allows some file format, like Microsoft Word, Lotus 1-2-3 or ZIP, to be displayed and used seamlessly inside Navigator, just like HTML web pages are. A plug-in tells Navigator what MIME type it supports and when a file of that type is clicked on, Netscape invokes the plug-in to display the file. Plug-ins can also be used to display files embedded in web pages and to display email attachments. From the user's point of view, the plug-in operates invisibly within Netscape, thus removing the intermediate step of having the user tell Netscape to run an outside Helper Application.

What versions of Netscape Navigator can Quick View Plus plug into?

Quick View Plus for Windows 3.1 can only plug into the Windows 3.1 version of Netscape Navigator 2.0. Quick View Plus for Windows 95 can only plug into the Windows 95 / Windows NT version of Netscape Navigator 2.0. All other versions of Navigator can use Quick View Plus as a Helper Application.

What's a MIME type?

A MIME type is a piece of text that tells Netscape the format of files it encounters. For instance, Microsoft Word documents have a MIME type of **application/msword**, web pages have a MIME type of **text/html** and ZIP files have a MIME type of **application/zip**. When a link in a web page is clicked on, the web server tells Navigator what MIME type the file is in and Navigator either

views the file itself (as in the case of HTML or GIF files) or uses the plug-in that has registered that MIME type to view the file.

What's the problem with MIME types?

There are two problems with MIME types.

First, MIME types have not been defined for all the file formats that Quick View Plus supports. While most of the major applications have MIME types (like **application/msword** or **application/x-wordperfect6**), many of the lesser know formats (like R:Base, Wordstar and Q&A Write) don't. While this is an inconvenience for people who want to expose these legacy file types on the web, it does not present a major problem for more recent file types .

Second, MIME types must be specified in a very exact way. In general, servers use the file's extension (the letters after the . in the file's name) to match a MIME type to a document. This means that documents must be named the right thing or the MIME type will be wrong and Navigator will not be able to run the right plug-in to view the file. For instance if you have a WordPerfect document that is named **document.doc**, your server is likely to tell the browser it is a Microsoft Word document, not a WordPerfect document. Moreover, many servers have incomplete or incorrect MIME type associations. This often causes files to be identified by the server as some default value like "plain/text", defeating the browser's ability to choose the correct plug-in.

What does Quick View Plus do about these problems?

When Quick View Plus is installed, it sets itself up to be the plug-in for the following list of MIME types and extensions:

MIME Type	Extensions
application/dca-rft	rft,fft
application/dec-dx	dx
application/msword	doc
application/rtf	rtf
application/x-ami	sam
application/x-compress	z,taz
application/x-dbase	dbf
application/x-enable-spreadsheet	ssf
application/x-enable-wp	wpf
application/x-framework	fw3
application/x-freelance	pre
application/x-lotus123	wks,wk3,wk4,wg2
application/x-msaccess	mdb
application/x-msbinder	odb
application/x-msexcel	xls,xlc
application/x-mspowerpoint	ppt
application/x-msworks-db	wdb
application/x-msworks-wp	wps
application/x-mswrite	wri
application/x-multiplan	mod
application/x-paradox	db
application/x-quattro-dos	wq1,wq2
application/x-quattro-win	wb1,wb2
application/x-quickviewplus	
application/x-supercalc5	cal
application/x-tar	tar

application/x-wordperfect6	wpd
application/zip	zip
image/tiff	tif,tiff
image/x-amidraw	sdw
image/x-autocad	dxf
image/x-cgm	cgm
image/x-gem	img
image/x-harvard-graphics	sy3,ch3
image/x-hpgl	pgl
image/x-lotus-pic	pic
image/x-micrografx	drw
image/x-pc-paintbrush	pcx,dcx
image/x-targa	tga,targa
image/x-win-bitmap	bmp,ico,cur,rle,dib
image/x-win-metafile	wmf
image/x-wordperfect-graphics	wpg

While these types cover all the current major applications and will fit the needs of most users, they may not be appropriate for everyone. For instance, you may have a utility that unZIPs ZIP files that you like better that Quick View Plus's ZIP support. In this case you need the ability to remove Quick View Plus's support for the **application/zip** MIME type, allowing you to install your favorite ZIP utility as a helper application. Alternatively, you may have MIME types that your corporation uses internally or are unknown to us that you would like Quick View Plus to handle. For instance, your corporate intranet may use **application/wordperfect** instead of **application/x-wordperfect6** for WordPerfect documents. In this case you need the ability to add a Quick View Plus plug-in for that MIME type. To resolve these problems, Quick View Plus ships with a small utility called QVPMIME.EXE that allows you to tailor which MIME types Quick View Plus supports as plug-ins.

This gives the user the flexibility to simplify many of the complexities involved in specifying MIME types. Nevertheless, some problems will remain which must be solved by the Webmaster at the web server. For more information on this topic, see the *Webmaster Information* section below for more details on how to use Quick View Plus in a corporate intranet environment.

What is QVPMIME.EXE?

QVPMIME is a utility that replaces and extends the functionality of the Helpers dialog in Netscape 2.0. The Helpers dialog lets you add MIME types and tells Netscape what to do when a file of this type is clicked on. You can set it to ask you what to do, to save the file to disk or you can associate a Helper Application with the MIME type. QVPMIME lets you do all this, plus it lets you associate a Quick View Plus plug-in with the MIME type. QVPMIME has the added ability to show you what other plug-ins are installed on your system and what MIME types they support.
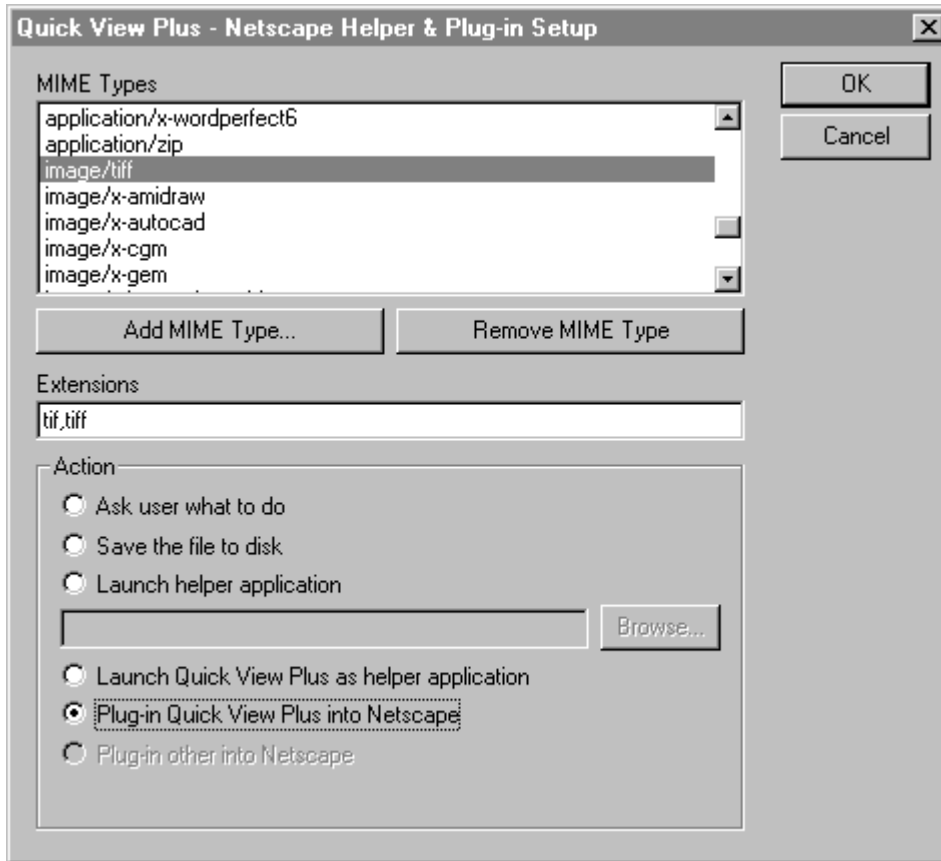
Where is QVPMIME.EXE?

If you are using the Windows 3.1 version of Quick View Plus, QVPMIME.EXE will be in a subdirectory called ADDON under the directory where you installed Quick View Plus.

If you are using the Windows 95 version of Quick View Plus, QVPMIME.EXE will be in a subdirectory called SUPPORT under the directory where you installed Quick View Plus.

How do I use QVPMIME.EXE?

Run QVPMIME.EXE as you would any other Windows application. If you are going to use it often, you might consider creating an icon for it in Program Manager under Windows 3.1 or adding it to your Start/Programs menu under Windows 95.

QVPMIME consists of one dialog box that look like this:

MIME Types
This list box shows all the MIME types that have been setup in Netscape. Note that this list does not contain many of the default MIME types that Netscape lists in its Helpers dialog because these types are hard-coded into Navigator and cannot be changed. When you select a MIME type from this list, the associated extensions and actions required for this MIME type are displayed below.

Add MIME Type…
This button displays a dialog that allows you to enter a new MIME type that you would like to associate with some action.

Remove MIME Type
This button removes the selected MIME type. Navigator will return to its default behavior for this MIME type.

Extensions
This edit box allows you to associate extensions with the selected MIME type. Netscape uses these extension to determine the MIME type of a file when it is not provided by the server. For instance, when looking at an FTP site, MIME types are not included with the files, so Navigator uses these extensions to determine the MIME types of the files. More than one extension can be entered for a single MIME type. For instance, both the extensions **tif** and **tiff** are associated with the **image/tiff** MIME type, so files named picture.tif and picture.tiff would both be identified as **image/tiff.** Multiple extensions should be separated with commas like so "tif, tiff".

Action
This group of radio buttons allows you to select the action Navigator will take when a file with the selected MIME type is clicked on.

Ask user what to do
Netscape will bring up a dialog box asking you what to do with the file.

Save the file to disk
Netscape will bring up a Save As dialog box.

Launch helper application
Netscape will launch the application defined in the edit box below. You may use the Browse button to search for helper applications.

Launch Quick View Plus as helper application
This is a shortcut to selecting Launch helper application and browsing for SCCVAPI.EXE on Windows 3.1 or QVP32.EXE on Windows 95.

Plug-in Quick View Plus into Netscape
Netscape will use Quick View Plus as a plug-in to view the file.

Plug-in other into Netscape
This means that a plug-in other than Quick View Plus is installed for the selected MIME type. When this is the case, you will not be able to change this MIME type to a different action because QVPMIME has no control over plug-ins that are not Quick View Plus's. The text below this selection will show some technical information about the plug-in.

OK
This button saves the changes you have made and exits the application.

Cancel
This button cancels your changes and exits the application.

How do I print and copy to the clipboard from a plug-in?

Right clicking inside the plug-in window will display a context menu that allows you to print or copy to the clipboard. Printing from Netscape's File menu will only work when the file is being viewed using the full Netscape window, i.e. not when the file is embedded inside an HTML document. Copying from Netscape's Edit menu will never work with a plug-in.

Webmaster information

This section assumes the reader has a working knowledge of Netscape Navigator 2.0, Helper Applications, Plug-ins, the Internet, MIME types and web servers.

How does Quick View Plus save me time and money?

In a corporate intranet environment, having Quick View Plus plugged into Netscape on your users' machines saves you the time and hassle of converting all your content into HTML. Word documents, 1-2-3 spreadsheets, PowerPoint presentations and all the other file types Quick View Plus supports can simply be referenced or embedded (using the HTML EMBED tag) in your web pages.

How should I setup the MIME types on my server?

There are a few of ways to do this. One way is to edit your mime.types file (or its equivalent on your web server) and include all the MIME types (and their associated extensions) listed in the *What does Quick View Plus do about these problems* section above.

Another way is to remove all of the MIME type mappings from your mime.types file except the ones that map to formats Quick View Plus does not support. For instance you would remove the mapping of **application/msword** to the .doc extension but not the *text/html* to .htm extension mapping. Once you have removed all the extra MIME type mappings from your mime.types file you can setup the default MIME type on your server to be **application/x-quickviewplus** (it's usually **text/plain**). This MIME type is installed by default when Quick View Plus plugs into Netscape. Then, any file with an extension that is not explicitly mapped in mime.types will be viewed using the Quick View Plus plug-in. This works because Quick View Plus does not really care what the MIME type is; MIME types are just a way to get Navigator to run the Quick View Plus plug-in. Once the plug-in gets control, the file is identified by its content, not by the MIME type.

Alternatively you can leave the default MIME type on your server as **text/plain** and set up a Quick View Plus plug-in on the client to handle this MIME type using the QVPMIME utility.