

## Light weight EXCEL download

Article

[Robert Cemper](#) · Aug 22, 2017



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I worked through the Community for proposals to provide end users in an easy way with data formatted as EXCEL sheet.

There is an great article [Tips & Tricks - SQL to Excel](#)

there's an important message embedded: "*EXCEL can interpret HTML tables and display them as usual*"

Nice!

But the result is on your server and you are left alone to get it out to your remote user somewhere.

Could be a subject to be solved using REST or WebServices.

In a different place it was proposed to use **ZENreports**. It's a great tool with a broad range of options and features. The weak point about: ZENreports is not covered by a typical standard license but requires an license extension. And it's not available on some older versions of Caché. So an upgrade might be necessary.

You also may face a discussion with your financial director on ROI and similar commercial subjects.

**And: The result is on your server and it's your extra job to get it to your remote user somewhere.**

As seen before.

Next approach: Using **Activate** to write EXCEL directly through standard DLLs.

YES, you get all in your hands that you need and much more that you don't want and don't need because EXCEL is huge.

I've seen implementations that had a C# wrapper in between to filter out unwanted functionality.

OK! You have full control.

But would you like to have a full EXCEL installation on your Windows server? With the related licensing?

Combined with the unpredictable risk of sudden product changes as we have experience with MS?

**And: The result is again on your server and it's your extra job to get it to your remote user somewhere.**

As seen before.

Another proposal: **Squirrel**

Now the transport to users is solved! This is a fine solution with well educated users understanding SQL.

But 2 things need to be handled:

- Getting the correct version installed at the user's equipment. A matter of the user population.
- Managing SQL access rights to have enough rights to succeed and equally to prevent misuse.

It's a standard with relational DBs. But I haven't seen it often with Caché.

### Where's the light weight export to EXCEL ?

After that research I went back in history.

Good old **CSP** is well equipped to produce HTML tables accepted from EXCEL as input.

With modern Browsers you don't even need `<head>` and `<body>` tags.

So the required code around your SQL result set is really slim.

And you are free to add any formatting you need either by HTML or in SQL.

The final trick to move your table from browser to EXCEL:

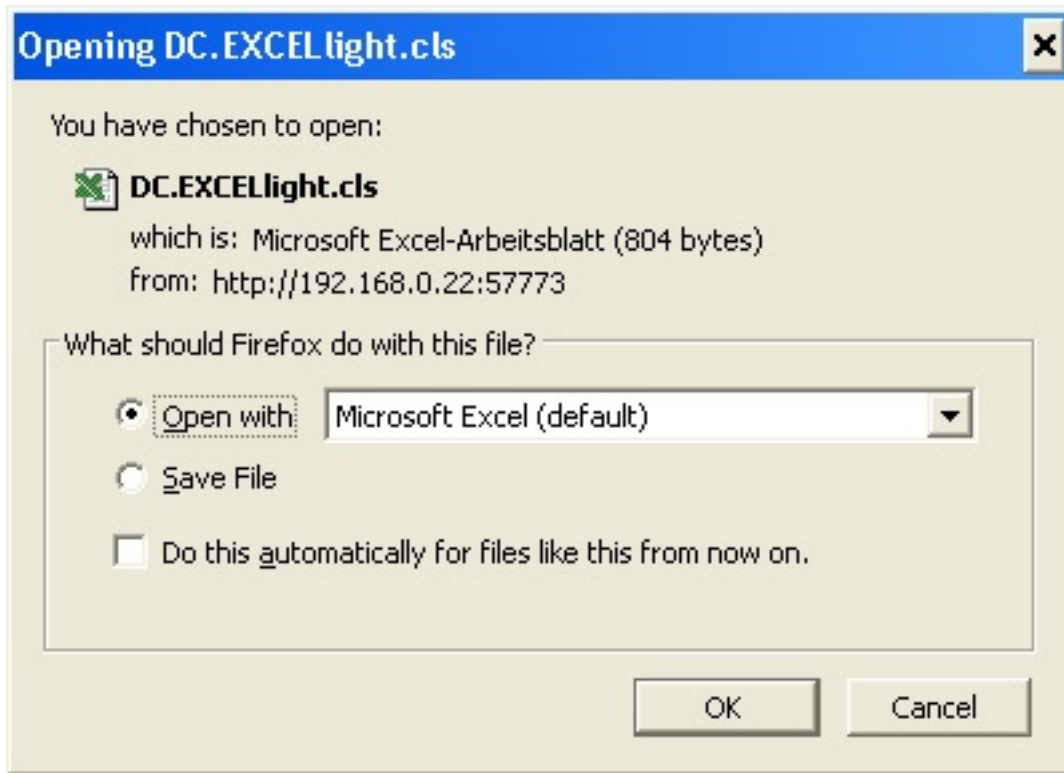
In the method OnPreHTTP inherited from %CSP.Page you set %response.ContentType="**application/vnd.ms-excel**"

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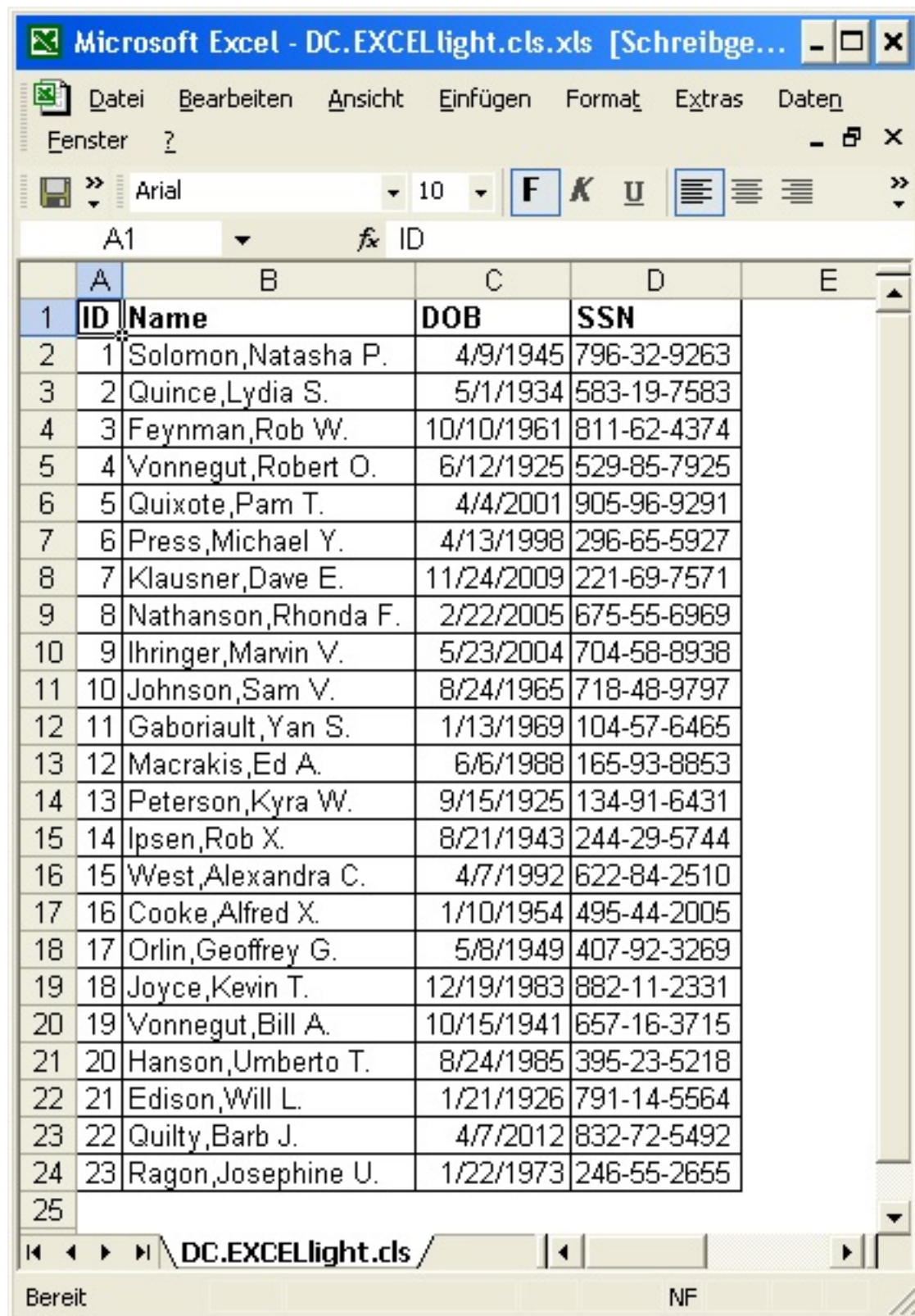
Now when you call the class with your browser you get asked to open or to save it. Next, because the extension is **.cls** you get asked for the program to open it.



And if you select EXCEL the table is ready for the user to work with it.

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The screenshot shows a Microsoft Excel window titled "DC.EXCELLight.cls.xls [Schreibge...". The spreadsheet contains a table with the following data:

ID	Name	DOB	SSN
1	Solomon, Natasha P.	4/9/1945	796-32-9263
2	Quince, Lydia S.	5/1/1934	583-19-7583
3	Feynman, Rob W.	10/10/1961	811-62-4374
4	Vonnegut, Robert O.	6/12/1925	529-85-7925
5	Quixote, Pam T.	4/4/2001	905-96-9291
6	Press, Michael Y.	4/13/1998	296-65-5927
7	Klausner, Dave E.	11/24/2009	221-69-7571
8	Nathanson, Rhonda F.	2/22/2005	675-55-6969
9	Ihringer, Marvin V.	5/23/2004	704-58-8938
10	Johnson, Sam V.	8/24/1965	718-48-9797
11	Gaboriault, Yan S.	1/13/1969	104-57-6465
12	Macrakis, Ed A.	6/6/1988	165-93-8853
13	Peterson, Kyra W.	9/15/1925	134-91-6431
14	Ipsen, Rob X.	8/21/1943	244-29-5744
15	West, Alexandra C.	4/7/1992	622-84-2510
16	Cooke, Alfred X.	1/10/1954	495-44-2005
17	Orlin, Geoffrey G.	5/8/1949	407-92-3269
18	Joyce, Kevin T.	12/19/1983	882-11-2331
19	Vonnegut, Bill A.	10/15/1941	657-16-3715
20	Hanson, Umberto T.	8/24/1985	395-23-5218
21	Edison, Will L.	1/21/1926	791-14-5564
22	Quilty, Barb J.	4/7/2012	832-72-5492
23	Ragon, Josephine U.	1/22/1973	246-55-2655

### Summary:

This could be a slim solution for rater static SQL queries.  
Well suited to serve a wide distributed population of users.

- No need for additional EXCEL installation on Caché server
- No need for new Caché version + license upgrades to run ZENreports
- No need for extra transport to move results to users

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- No need for local installed software (Squirrel)
- No need for additional management of SQL access rights

Rather small size of code with simple structure

Now you will understand why I titled the article "[Light Weight](#)"

You may download my tiny example for namespace SAMLPE\$ [here as .zip](#)

This is a coding example working on Caché 2018.1.3 and IRIS 2020.2  
It will not be kept in synch with new versions  
It is also **NOT** serviced by InterSystems **Support** !

[#CSP](#) [#ObjectScript](#) [#SQL](#) [#Caché](#) [#InterSystems](#) [IRIS](#)  
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