Qualcomm® DirectOffice™ Conversion Software for Viewing Microsoft Office Documents

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Challenges Viewing Microsoft Office Attachments

Many of today's leading enterprise software platforms support file attachments to ensure users have access to all the information needed to perform their jobs. And many of these attachments are Microsoft Office documents – the most used document types in business today, with over 500 billion Office documents created every year.

Microsoft Office files can be found across multiple industry software segments: CRM systems store proposals and RFPs in Word and PowerPoint formats; ERP systems deal in invoices and cost distribution files in Excel format; ITSM systems track asset inventories and contracts; ECM systems manage customer files and product designs; HCM systems keep resumes and salary justifications.

Most solutions support viewing PDF and image files, where the layouts are strictly defined. But the open-ended nature, complicated structure, and system resource dependencies of Microsoft Office files make viewing them a challenge. Many products don't enable viewing Office files at all, requiring users to download and open them in a separate application. Those products that do support viewing Office files often do so with low conversion quality, and users download and open the files with Microsoft Office anyway.

"Being blunt, viewing documents is a table-stakes feature for our platform. Millions of users need the ability to view attachments with our platform and across our applications."
— VP of Product Management at a Leading ITSM Provider

The DirectOffice SDK Solution

DirectOffice is a software development kit (SDK) that accurately converts popular Office files to accessible, read-only formats. DirectOffice SDK is built on 30 years of format conversion experience and is used in millions of devices worldwide. DirectOffice has been used to convert over a billion documents for viewing and printing, with no dependency on Microsoft Office.

DirectOffice provides a streamlined user experience by enabling one-click attachment conversion and previewing with a consistent appearance on multiple platforms, including Android, iOS, Web, Windows, and Linux. DirectOffice SDK supports both integrations with mobile applications and with web-based applications, including serverless and zero-footprint applications targeted at sectors most concerned with information governance compliance and data protection.

Why Not Microsoft Office?

Launching Microsoft Office to view attachments has several drawbacks. First, using standalone Microsoft Office may not be secure if the expectation is that the attached files remain under the control of the enterprise software platform. If a user needs to download files that include sensitive data (e.g. covered by CCPA, GDPR, HIPAA, IP, PII regulations) to a local device to view their contents, the software platform no longer has control over that data, which could be modified or redistributed, violating policy.

Second, reliance on a third-party application that runs outside of the enterprise solution platform decreases the usability of that solution. Interruptions and workflow delays to download files and launch Microsoft Office are frequently cited by users concerned about engagement and productivity.

Finally, Microsoft Office is costly and not as broadly available on mobile devices as on PCs.

"IG World has determined that the in-line display technology deficiencies in popular collaboration tools represent a significant IG policy compliance risk. "
— Information Governance World Magazine
https://issuu.com/infogovworld/docs/igw_vol_2_issue_1/29

What About Existing Office Converters?

There are solutions that claim to be able to convert Microsoft Office documents, but many have a major flaw – they do a poor job converting Office files to viewable formats. Some tools try to replace the entire Office suite and pay little attention to accurate output. Others attempt to support a multitude of file formats with a universal representation that misses the complexity of the full Office specifications. Solutions using these converters usually include disclaimers when viewing files that layout issues and data loss can be expected.

Off-the-shelf converters also typically have off-the-shelf pricing, with little flexibility to fit within a potential customer's business models. Metering or user tracking is often required, burdening the solution provider with additional licensing responsibilities.

Learn More about DirectOffice

DirectOffice toolkit allows software publishers to protect sensitive content, improving user engagement with high-fidelity viewing of Microsoft Office documents directly within the application supporting all popular mobile and web devices.

To find out more, visit https://www.qualcomm.com/products/industrial-commercial/printers-imaging/directoffice

You can also test our conversion quality here: https://directoffice.qualcomm.com/upload.html