

Reference Manager Extension

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Preview Guide

File relationships can be complex. But with the Reference Manager Extension, managing them is simple. Remember when a change to the name of a file server or directory meant manually updating all file reference paths on a file-by-file basis? Now with the Reference Manager Extension, you can automatically manage all file relationships and dependencies generated by AutoCAD® software and industry-specific products built on AutoCAD. Use it to produce a network-wide report on all the paths among reference files: drawings, images, standards, fonts, and plot styles. And if you need to update reference paths, simply specify your change, and it occurs globally.

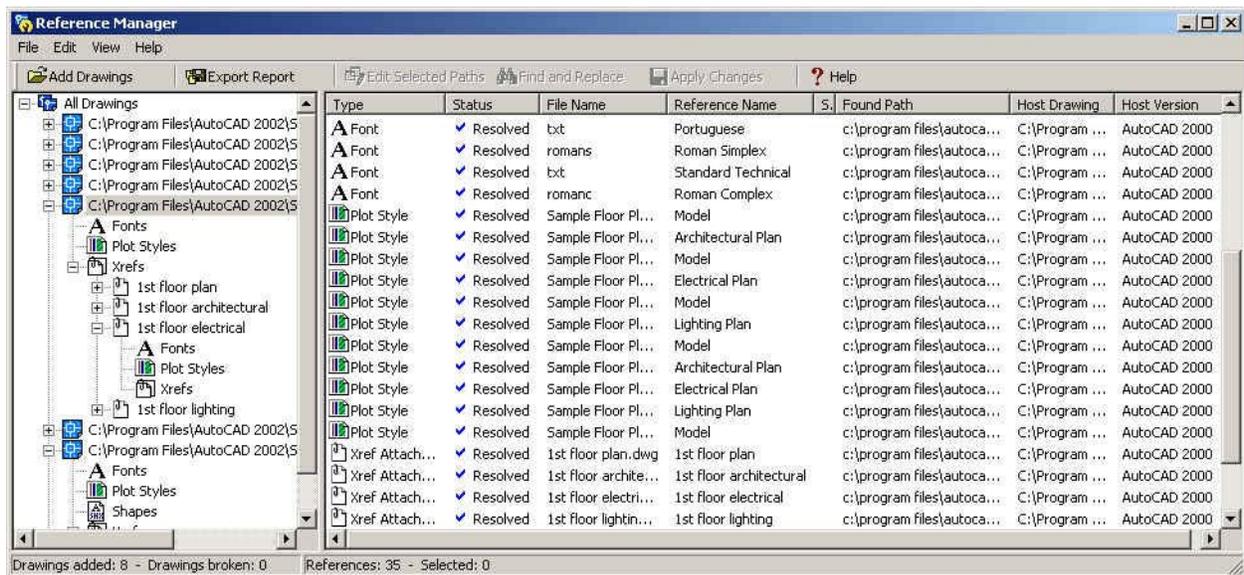


Figure 1: Reference Manager

You can add multiple drawings or even entire directories to the list of files to be reported on. With any of the listed drawings selected, the Reference Manager displays detailed information about all file dependencies for that drawing.

Analyzing Drawing Dependencies

Items in the Files list (Figure 2) can be selected to reveal information about their references in the corresponding References list. Individual drawing nodes are expandable, and open to reveal additional nodes for each of the supported reference types.

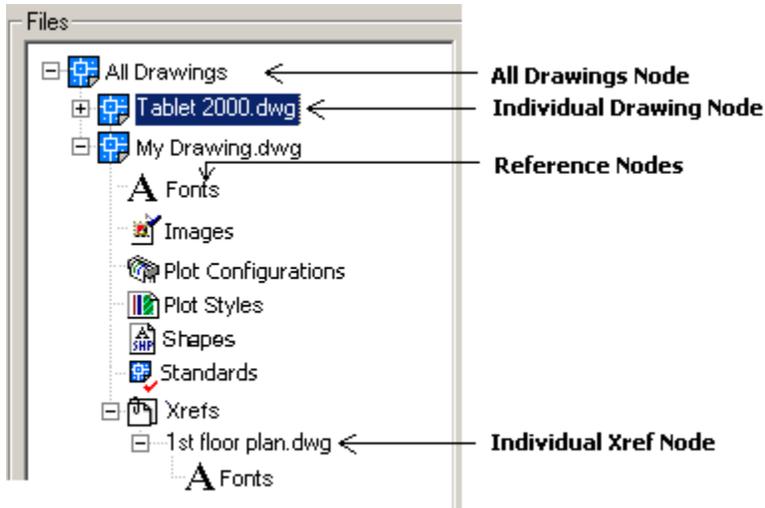


Figure 2: Files list

A status column in this list (Figure 3) provides clear, iconic representation of the status of individual rows (for example, whether the reference resolves properly or is broken in some way). You can then sort on this status column to quickly group problem references for easy manipulation.

Reference Manager opens each file and attempts to find each reference. If Reference Manager finds a reference with the correct file name and location, then the reference is marked as "Resolved"; if not, it is marked as "Not Found."

Type	Status	File Name
Font	Not Found	txt.shx
Font	Not Found	romans.shx
Font	Not Found	simplex.shx
Font	Not Found	romand.shx
Font	Not Found	txt.shx
Font	Not Found	romand.shx
Plot Style	Resolved	sample floor...
Plot Style	Resolved	sample floor...
Plot Style	Resolved	sample floor...
Xref Overlay	Resolved	1st floor pla...

Figure 3: File status

Correcting Unresolved Paths

If you need to correct unresolved paths, you can select multiple references and correct their paths in a single operation, as shown in Figures 4 and 5.

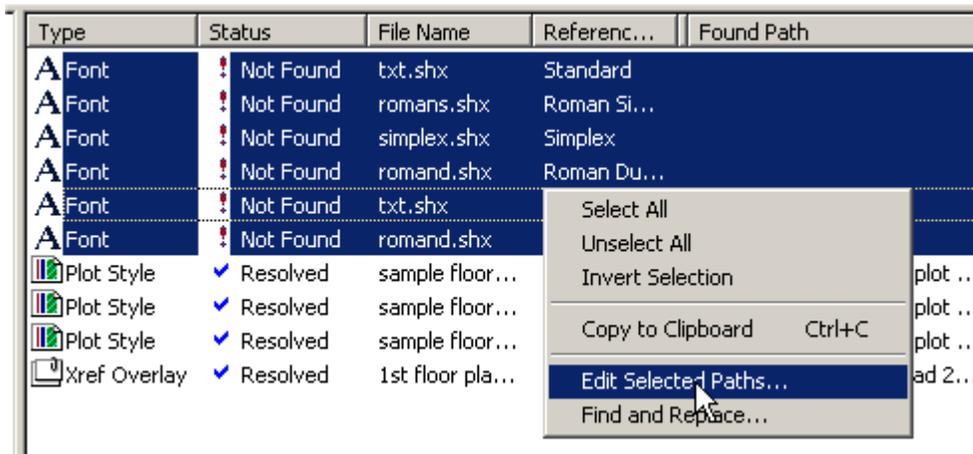


Figure 4: Edit selected paths

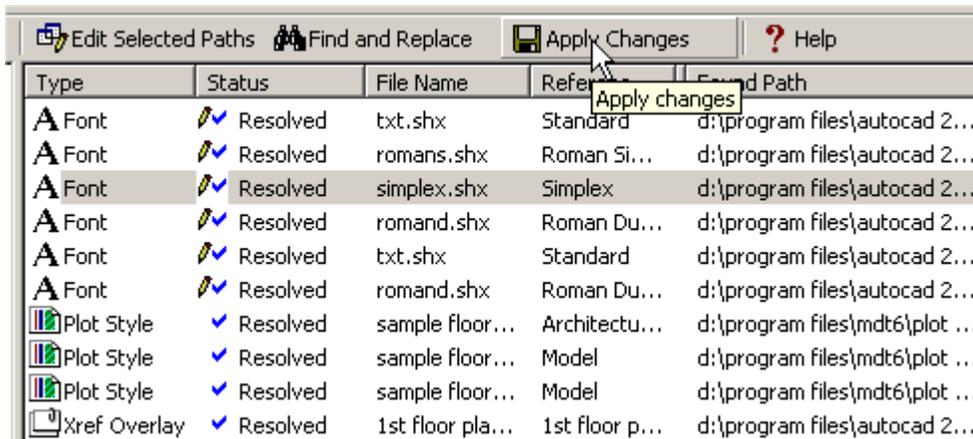


Figure 5: Apply changes

Because the Reference Manager can operate on large numbers of files on multiple computers at once, path changes are queued up and written back to the files only when you apply changes.

Managing External Reference Paths

One of the AutoCAD settings that affects how references can be located is within the User Profile; there, under Options, you can set Reference Manager to search for references based on a selected profile (Figure 6).

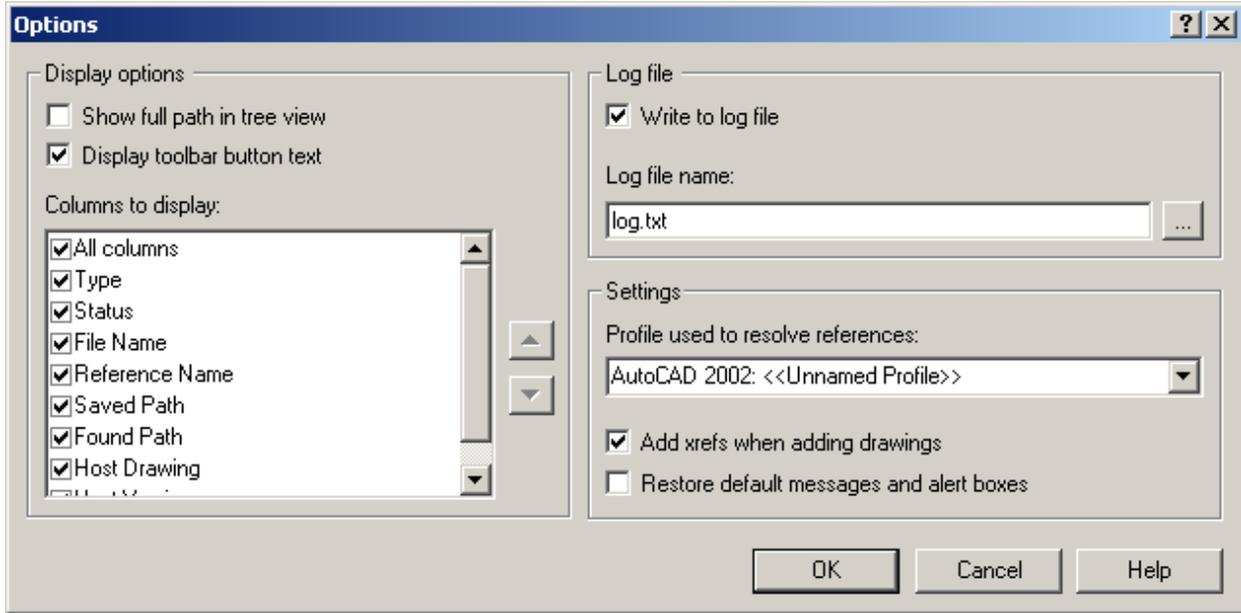


Figure 6: Options dialog box

Getting an overall reference “map” of all the files on your network is simple with Reference Manager. When a master file is loaded, Reference Manager can be set to automatically load all external references (xrefs) (Figure 7). Even nested xrefs will be identified and loaded.

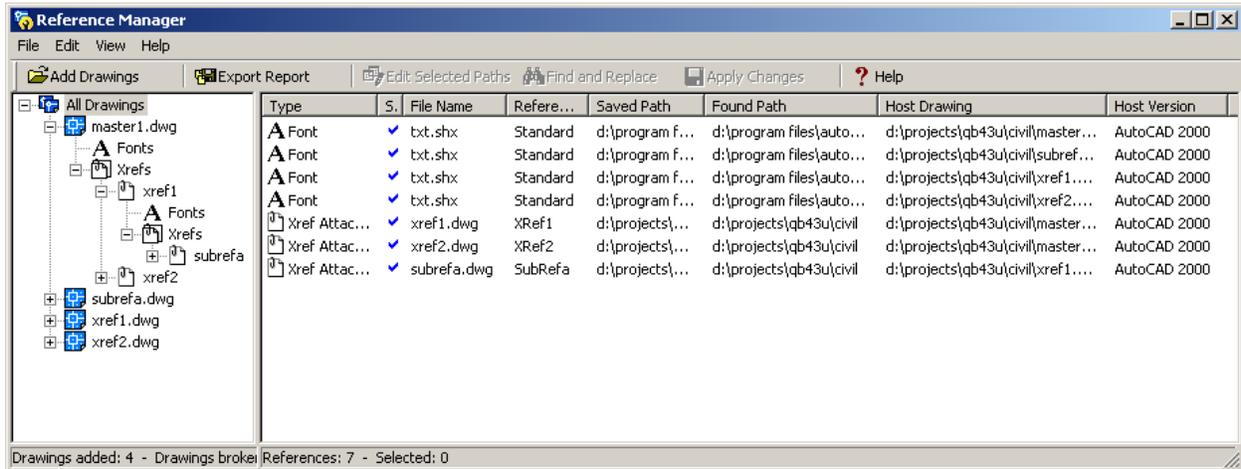


Figure 7: All external references load automatically.

Any xrefs that cannot be located are clearly indicated in the user interface (Figure 8).

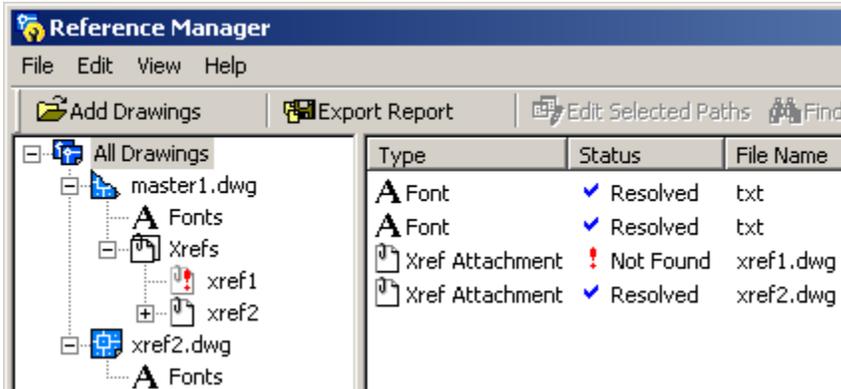


Figure 8: Unresolved xrefs are indicated with a red exclamation point.

One of the most powerful features of Reference Manager is the ability to find and replace path information (Figure 9). If you ever have to move project directories from one server to another or implement a new directory naming convention, Reference Manager makes updating your design data a simple find-and-replace operation.

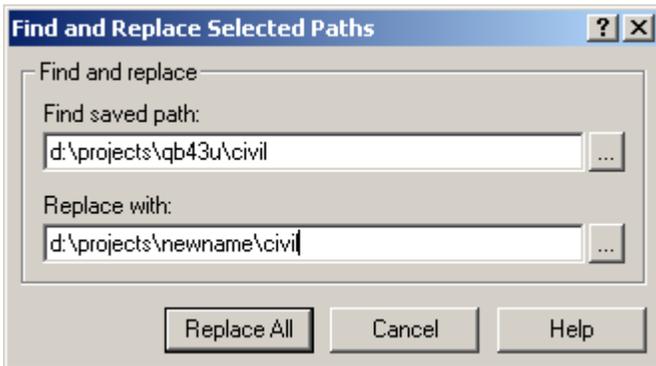


Figure 9: Find and Replace Selected Paths dialog box

The Find and Replace tool is best used when the references use some of the same path information, but the subfolders are varied. You can select several references with varied paths and only the references that match the Find Saved Path field will be replaced. For example if you select the following paths:

C:\program files\autoCAD 2002\sample
 C:\program files\autoCAD 2002\fonts
 C:\program files\autoCAD 2002\support

In the Find Saved Path field type "C:\program files\autoCAD 2002"

In the Replace with field type "C:\Project A"

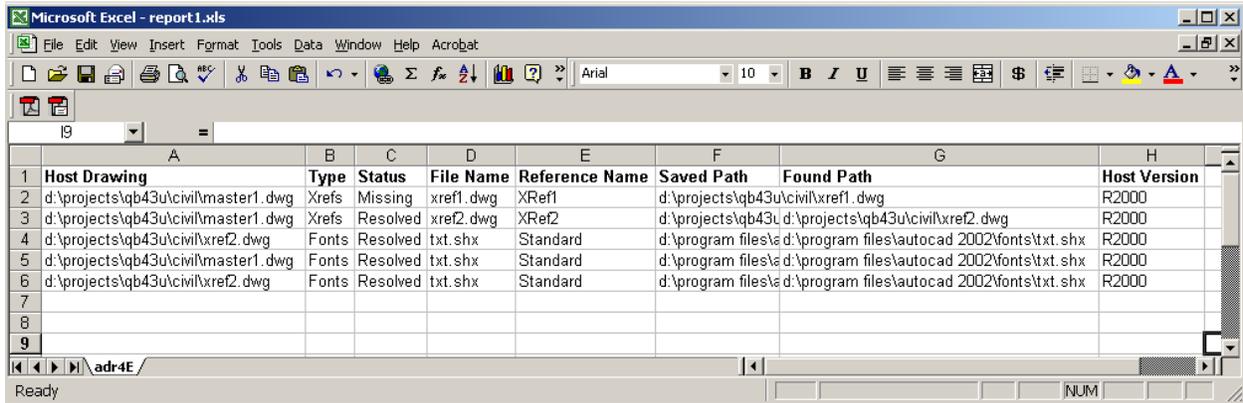
The result is the following paths:

C:\Project A\sample
 C:\Project A\fonts
 C:\Project A\support

Report Options

Reports can be exported in XML and comma-separated text (CSV) formats. If you have Microsoft® Excel installed on your computer, you can also export the report to XLS format.

You can open your report in your favorite spreadsheet program for further analysis and printing (Figure 10).



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Host Drawing	Type	Status	File Name	Reference Name	Saved Path	Found Path	Host Version
2	d:\projects\qb43\civil\master1.dwg	Xrefs	Missing	xref1.dwg	XRef1	d:\projects\qb43\civil\xref1.dwg		R2000
3	d:\projects\qb43\civil\master1.dwg	Xrefs	Resolved	xref2.dwg	XRef2	d:\projects\qb43\civil\xref2.dwg		R2000
4	d:\projects\qb43\civil\xref2.dwg	Fonts	Resolved	txt.shx	Standard	d:\program files\autocad 2002\fonts\txt.shx		R2000
5	d:\projects\qb43\civil\master1.dwg	Fonts	Resolved	txt.shx	Standard	d:\program files\autocad 2002\fonts\txt.shx		R2000
6	d:\projects\qb43\civil\xref2.dwg	Fonts	Resolved	txt.shx	Standard	d:\program files\autocad 2002\fonts\txt.shx		R2000
7								
8								
9								

Figure 10: Report exported to Microsoft Excel

XML format reports can easily be manipulated and imported into other custom and commercial applications (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Exported XML code

Conclusion

With the ability to report on and edit network-wide reference dependencies from a central location, the Reference Manager Extension makes it easy to manage large numbers of AutoCAD platform-based drawing files (DWG) in an environment where external references are used.

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