

What are EDIReader plugins?

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Both ANSI X12 and EDIFACT have repeating and nested sequences of EDI segments within an EDI document. In EDIFACT, these are segment groups appearing with a message. In X12, they are loops within a transaction set. In either case, for a given document type, the standard defines what segment types begin a new instance of a group/loop, depending upon the specific context in which a segment appears. An EDIReader plugin is a Java class that contains metadata about the a particular document type so that EDIReader can infer the nested segment groupings while parsing a document of that type. It is not necessary to have a plugin for the type of documents you wish to parse. If no plugin is available for a document type encountered while parsing an EDI interchange, EDIReader generates XML for the segments within that document without regard to the segment groupings defined by the standard. If a plugin is present, then EDIReader generates additional XML tags that express the segment groupings. Since a particular segment type may appear in various positions within an EDI document and have a very different meaning depending upon the segment grouping context, the presence of a plugin can greatly simplify your access to EDI content with XSLT or XPath.

EDIReader comes with several plugins for both X12 and EDIFACT, and BerryWorks Software is able to provide necessary plugins as part of a license purchase and often takes requests for plugins to be included in the GPL version of EDIReader. If you are familiar with the segment groupings for a particular document type, you may also develop a plugin yourself using the provided ones as examples.