

How to use SignWriter Python

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Valerie Sutton, Stuart Thiessen and Stefan Wöhrmann
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1. What is the SignWriter Python Project ?

The SWPP is a set of programs that should help you using your old SignWriter DOS documents without any virtual machine. Currently you need a DOS emulator or a Virtual Windows 98 to run the old SignWriter DOS 4.4.

The SWPP is written in Python, here is a quote from the [python website \(www.python.org\)](http://www.python.org):

What is Python?

Python is an *interpreted, interactive, object-oriented* programming language. It is often compared to Tcl, Perl, Scheme or Java.

Python combines remarkable power with very clear syntax. It has modules, classes, exceptions, very high level dynamic data types, and dynamic typing. There are interfaces to many system calls and libraries, as well as to various windowing systems (X11, Motif, Tk, Mac, MFC). New built-in modules are easily written in C or C++. Python is also usable as an extension language for applications that need a programmable interface.

The Python implementation is portable: it runs on many brands of UNIX, on Windows, OS/2, Mac, Amiga, and many other platforms.

Like Python and wxPython, this project is Open Source, which means that it is free for everyone to use and the source code is available for anyone to look at and modify it. And anyone can contribute fixes or enhancements to the project.

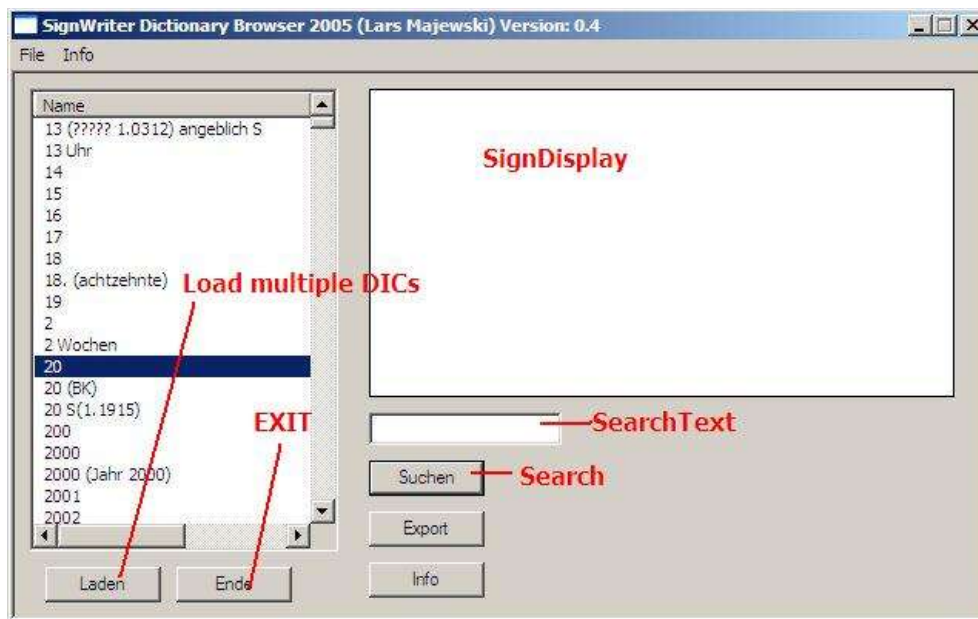
The project is still in an early stage, so don't expect too much.

You can already view dictionaries or SignFiles, but the SignWriter is still under development.

The SignWriter Python Project is based on the old SignWriter DOS. So it uses the same symbol set (**SSS1995**) . That is why all Symbols look a bit pixalised. But we'll improve that later.

2. What programs does it contain ?

You can already use the Dictionary Browser:

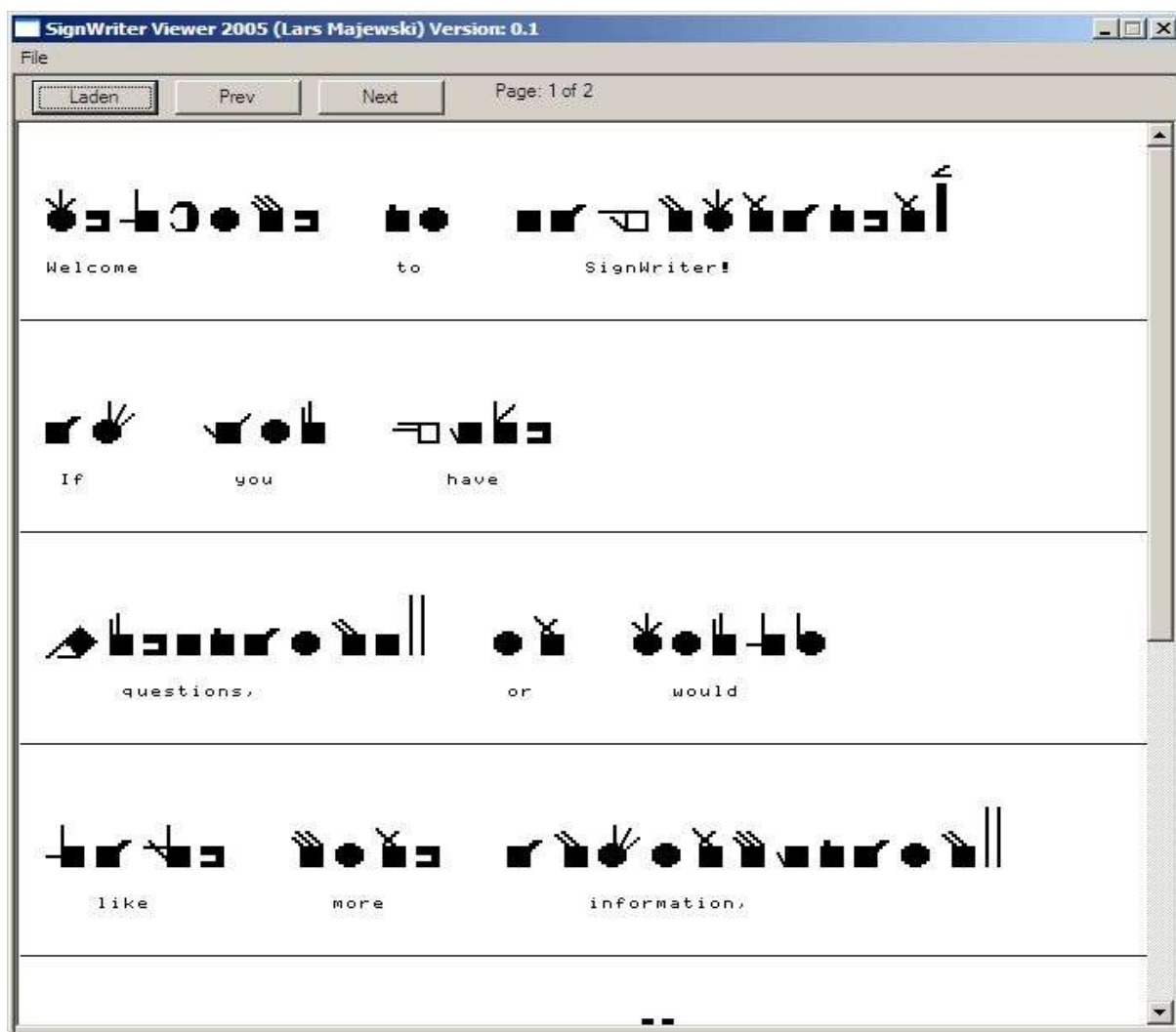


You can use it to load multiple **dic** files and search them through.

Buttons:

- Laden:** Select the dic files you want to be displayed
- Ende:** Exit
- Suchen:** Search for an entered text and redisplay the whole list after the search by deleting the search text and press **Suchen** again
- Export:** Save the current sign as a png image
- Clear:** Clear the list

And the SignWriter Viewer:



You can load and display your old SignWriter DOS **sgn** files.

The Print function is not yet implemented.

Buttons:

- Laden:** load a **sgn** file
- Prev:** jump one page back
- Next:** jump to the next page

3. Prerequisites:

To run the programs, you need a Python / wxPython Framework. That is necessary because python is a script language. That means you get the source code and the Framework will interpret while executing.

How to install the Framework on Windows or Mac, please take a look at the installation part (5).

4. How do I start the programs ?

On windows it's very easy, just open the **SignWriter Python** folder and double-click on

-> **wxsignviewer.pyw** to start the SignWriter Viewer

-> **wxdict.pyw** to start the Dictionary Browser



On Mac, start the **SWPython.app** and choose the application.



If you want to learn more about this AppleScript, take a look at the **README.mac**

5. Installation

5a) Installation on Windows

To install python download it at:

<http://www.python.org/ftp/python/2.4/python-2.4.msi>

then execute it and follow the instructions.

To install wxPython download it at:

<http://prdownloads.sourceforge.net/wxpython/wxPython2.5-win32-ansi-2.5.3.1-py24.exe>

and do the same.

Download the current SWPP Version at

<http://signwriter.takdoc.de>

Now extract the archive. You'll get an folder named **SignWriter Python** .

Move this folder wherever you want it to be.

You can start the application with a double click on **wxdict.pyw** or **wxsignviewer.pyw**.

5b) Installation on Mac

If you have Mac OS X Panther you can skip the following step concerning Python. Python 2.3 is included in Mac OS X Panther.

Step1) To install python download it at:

<http://homepages.cwi.nl/~jack/macpython/download.html>

Now you need administrator privileges to install it.

So log in as appropriate user and install it.

Step2) To install wxPython download it at:

<http://www.wxpython.org/download.php#binaries>

Choose the right build for your machine and install it.

Warning: Do not choose a Unicode build! It'll probably not run.

Step3) Download the current SWPP Version at

<http://signwriter.takdoc.de>

Extract the archive. You'll get a folder named **SignWriter Python** .

Move this folder to your home directory.

You can start the application using the **SWPython.app** frontend.

6. Submitting Bugs:

If you found a bug, please send a detailed error report to me at

info@signwriter.takdoc.de

If there is an error displaying a sign not correctly please attach your dictionary and mention the entry which is displayed wrong. Or attach the sign file and mention Page and Line.

7.Contact

If you have any questions about the dictionary browser not mentioned here, please contact me at

info@signwriter.takdoc.de

Thanks,

Lars Majewski