

Comparex: the Intelligent File Comparison Tool

As companies drive competitive differentiation through their enterprises, change to the mainframe systems that support those enterprises is a daily fact of life. Mainframe development teams are constantly challenged to attain higher levels of quality and productivity, reduce errors during program development, and shorten application rollout times. To be successful, mainframe development teams must understand changes to their systems.

Micro Focus® Comparex, an intelligent file comparison tool, can help. Comparex, with hundreds of licenses in production at large mainframe sites around the world, helps teams discover errors, increase productivity, reduce overall development costs, and shorten application deployment times. The combination of proven reliability, ease of use, and fast processing speed make Comparex the comparison tool of choice for development teams.

Benefits

Powerful File Comparison

Comparex, available on z/OS, z/VM, and z/VSE platforms, is the most powerful tool on the market for comparing data, text, and directory files. The product performs fast, accurate, single-step comparisons of the contents of virtually any two-file types—libraries, directories, sequential files, or databases. Additionally, file records of any size are supported. Customers have reported that Comparex typically reduces comparison job times between 50–80% compared to other solutions.

Easy to Use and Flexible

Comparex is flexible, offering a wide variety of control parameters to meet the needs of all users, from the beginner to the expert. Accessible via the online ISPF interface or through batch execution, even novice users find it easy to take full advantage of Comparex's advanced comparison functions with minimal training.

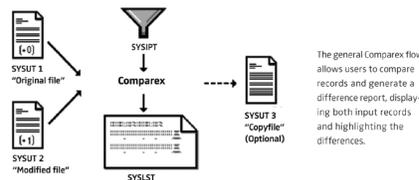


Figure 1. The general Comparex flow allows users to compare records and generate a difference report, displaying both input records and highlighting the differences.

Productivity is enhanced across multiple teams with Comparex. Production teams leverage Comparex to verify that updates to a production systems based on a scheduled change

Benefits

- Quickly and accurately validates changes to data, text, and directory files
- Simplifies debugging, testing, and data validation
- Increases productivity and improves quality of application development
- Unmatched file type support ensures repeatable validation across all of your applications
- 50–80% faster than other solutions

Features

- Any-to-Any Comparisons
- Copybook Parsing for all major languages
- DB2 and third-party database
- Unicode, International Dates and Conversion Units
- ISPF or Batch
- z/HFS and MVS File System
- Supports z/OS, z/VM, and z/VSE

control request were actually made. Auditors might use Comparex to document the differences between two production file versions. Online reports can be compared before printing to trap changes and then can be configured to print only the differences—saving printing time, consumables, and paper costs.

Comprehensive Text, Data, and Directory Comparison

Comparex is the only software comparison tool that includes text, data, and directory functionality in a single product.

The SYSUT3 COPYFILE output can also include separate files of changed records from either of the two input files. Comparex users have complete flexibility with the COPYSPLIT options and can have all, none, or any other combination of five output files for any Comparex execution.

Data Comparisons

In data comparison mode, Comparex offers a wide range of functionality. Complete data records or individual fields can be compared with differences highlighted down to the byte or half-byte level. Date fields in various formats can be compared—with automatic conversion between formats. There are no restrictions on record length or file size. Records can be in fixed, variable, or spanned formats. Comparex handles all formats with ease, even supporting comparison between different formats. In addition, a special mode even allows CSECT by CSECT comparison of load modules.

Text Comparisons

Comparex finds and isolates differences in text files. The fade facility displays a few lines above and below the difference to help with file position orientation.

Comparex can produce a delta report with one pass through the files, highlighting the differences for easy identification. Comparex support includes ADABAS, DB2, IMS, CA-DATACOM, FOCUS, CA-IDMS, Oracle, Wylbur, CA-Librarian, CA-Panvalet, JCL, COBOL, PL/1, FORTRAN, CLIST, REXX, HTML, XML, reports, and documentation files.

Copybook Parsing

If you are doing a DATA comparison and the files to be compared have a COBOL, Assembler, PL/I, or DCLGEN copybook layout associated with them, there is a Parser provided that can produce an accurate keyword layout that can be imported to your comparison routine.

Directory and Data Field Comparisons

Occasionally, you may not need to compare contents—you only need to compare directories for member names. Comparex supports directory member comparisons on PDS or PDS/E libraries. Comparex compares dates fields in files whether they have two digit years, four digit years, or a mixture. Dates can be alphanumeric and be compared successfully.

Keywords for Flexibility

Comparex provides over 50 keywords (such as: MASK, Record FILTER, Start/Stop options, Squeeze, String Searches) to tailor the comparison criteria to meet your exact requirements for both input files and output reporting. Records can be FILTERed, fields masked, and multiple selection criteria on a single record are supported.

Test Data Generation

Actual production data can be FILTERED to extract a subset of records for testing purposes. Testing quality is improved by using actual production data.

Delta Decks

The differences detected during a comparison can be written to a separate file called a delta (change) deck. Comparex allows users to create delta decks in CA-PANVALET, CA-LIBRARIAN, IEBUPDTE, or Micro Focus's ChangeMan ZMF format. Delta decks can speed the reconciliation of vendor packages and allow for improved version control of internally written programs.

Flexible Reporting

There are more than 50 options in Comparex for report formatting, including alphanumeric and hexadecimal display.

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