

ASP.NET & Ampersand in AppSetting or ConnectionString

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30, Jun. 2008

XML rules make it so that the & character is the token for beginning of a reference. With ASP.NET, you have the ability to store application specific settings (AppSettings) and connectionStrings to name a few. Perhaps you wanted to store a url with a query string in it eg:

```
<appSettings>
  <add key="myLink" value="http://mapserv.utah.gov/SGID?map=true&county=salt lake"/>
</appSettings>
```

Your .NET application would throw an error and say you needed a semi colon. Another example would be storing the connection string to a sql database.

```
<connectionStrings>
  <add name="ConnectionString" connectionString="Data Source=mySqlDatabase;Initial Catalog=Table;User
ID=ADMIN;Password=&password&" providerName="System.Data.SqlClient"/>
</connectionStrings>
```

This would not compile.

The solution to the problem is relatively simple but if you didn't know better it may be a bit of a stumper. All you need to do is convert your & to & The above samples would be

```
<appSettings>
  <add key="myLink" value="http://mapserv.utah.gov/SGID?map=true&county=salt lake"/>
</appSettings>
```

```
<connectionStrings>
  <add name="ConnectionString" connectionString="Data Source=mySqlDatabase;Initial Catalog=Table;User
ID=ADMIN;Password=&password&" providerName="System.Data.SqlClient"/>
</connectionStrings>
```

And your off!