

Extract from TUTORIALS IN APPLIED TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

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READERS QUESTIONS – COPYING FORMULAS

INDICATOR BUILDER

TRANSFER EXPLORATION REPORTS TO A SPREADSHEET

This is not an intuitive process. Once the Exploration report is completed select the REPORT option. Then select any one of the stocks listed by clicking on it. While this is highlighted press Ctrl and C. This is the keyboard command for copy. You cannot select a screen based command as this is not available.

Open a Works or Excel spreadsheet. Click on the top right hand cell, and then select PASTE from the EDIT menu. This will paste the full Metastock Exploration report into the spreadsheet. It also pastes this in columns. This makes it easy to work with the data.

Metastock is a very user friendly program, but this does not mean it is particularly easy to use. There are many features which, once explained, are straightforward, but which are initially quite confusing. The learning curve for Metastock is relatively slow for many users. Even for experienced users, many use perhaps 60% of the programs capacity. For those who want a push start on the learning curve, the book by S Sherwood, **Metastock in a Nutshell**, is excellent. For those who are more advanced, the book **A Companion to Metastock for Windows** by L Lukin is very useful.

Metastock is one of the most popular charting programs on a world wide basis, so there are a multitude of formulas available for it. We have a listing of several hundred on our web site. Apart from understanding what each formula is supposed to do, many people have some trouble distinguishing between exploration formulas, indicator formulas, and system test formulas.

The easiest way to decide how the formula should be used is to recognize the standard structure used in each case.

- An exploration formula is always in the structure, Column A, Column B etc then Filter if used. This structure is used because this is the only way to enter these formulas in Metastock.
- An indicator is always the structure that moves straight into a formula layout without the Column A etc notation.
- An expert advisor always has the notation Bullish followed by a set of formula conditions and Bearish, followed by a set of formula conditions.
- A system test always has the notation Enter Long - followed by a formula and Close Long - followed by a formula.

Having found the formula you want, the next task is to transfer this into Metastock. You could try entering the formula by hand, but this is very tricky. One mistake in spacing, one misplaced comma, and you get a frustrating error message. A far easier way is to simply use the copy and paste functions to transfer the exact formula into your copy of Metastock.

There are two processes here. The first involves copying a formula from a word document like the newsletter. The second is copying the formula from a web page.

COPY FROM WORD

If you are working from a Word document then, in summary, follow these steps.

- Open Metastock and open the new formula menu box. Detailed steps in the PASTING section below.
- Open the Word document which contains the formulas.
- Highlight a line of formula for column A in the Metastock formula box.
- Copy and paste this into the Metastock formula box.

The full steps on how to do this successfully are included in the PASTING section below so you can skip straight to that section. Copying the formula from a web site is more difficult and you will need to follow the steps below before moving to the paste steps.

WEBSITE COPYING

We have selected an exploration formula at random for this example. It is a complicated formula which would be very difficult to copy by hand. This is why we have chosen it. The first step is to copy the formula from the web site . Do this by highlighting the entire formula and then selecting COPY from the browser menu.

The text below is how these formulas typically appear on a web page.

ColA. Close c

ColB Trigger If(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP()")=1,H+.05, If(Ref(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP()"),-1)=1,Ref(H,-1)+.05, If(Ref(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP()"),-2)=1,Ref(H,-2)+.05, If(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP()") =-1,L-.05, If(Ref(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP()"),-1)=-1,Ref(L,-1)-.05,If(Ref(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP()"),-2)=-1,Ref(L,-2)-.05,0))))))

ColC Signal If(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP()") =1,1, If(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP()") =-1,-1,If(Ref(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP()"),-1)=1,2,If(Ref(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP()"),-1)=-1,-2,If(Ref(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP()"),-2)=1,3,If(Ref(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP()"),-2)=-1,-3,0))))))

Filter: When(v,>=,500000)AND When(ADX(14),>,mov(adx(14),8,e))AND When(colC<>0)

If the formula has been printed from the copy function in Metastock it will be in this format.

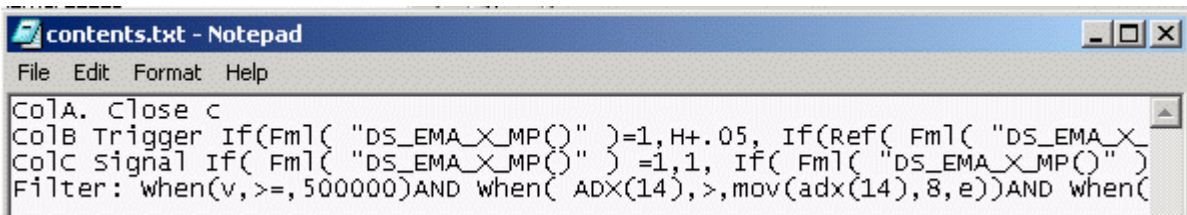
Col A: OscP(4 , 20,E ,percent)

Col B: VOLUME

Col C: CLOSE

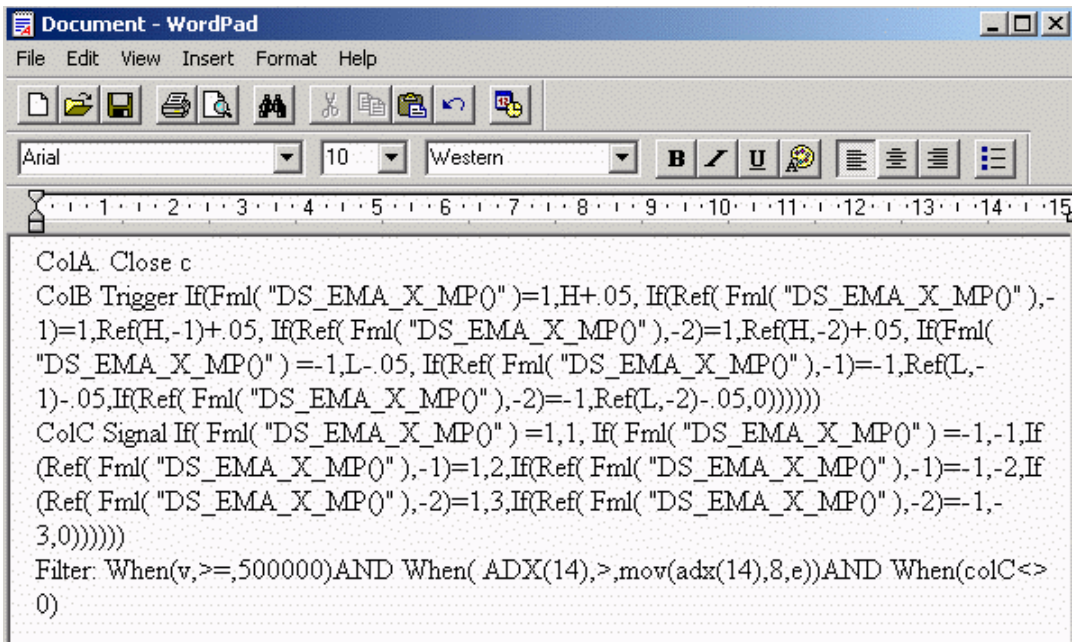
Filter colA>=1.84 AND colB >69999 AND colC <200 AND colC >100

In both cases, highlight the entire formula and copy it using the copy command from the browser menu.



```
contents.txt - Notepad
File Edit Format Help
ColA. Close c
ColB Trigger If(Fml( "DS_EMA_X_MP()" )=1,H+.05, If(Ref( Fml( "DS_EMA_X
ColC signal If( Fml( "DS_EMA_X_MP()" ) =1,1, If( Fml( "DS_EMA_X_MP()" )
Filter: when(v,>=,500000)AND when( ADX(14),>,mov(adx(14),8,e))AND when(
```

My preference is to then open a copy of word pad, or a txt document. In a text document the lines will run to the right without tab stops. Do not worry about the way they disappear. All the information is still there.



On the Word pad layout, the material run just the full width of the word pad display.

The one thing that you should not do is paste this into a Word document. When material is copied from a web page the copy instruction also picks up all the layout instructions as well. Paste this into a Word document, and it takes forever. You get an exact copy of the web page, rather than just the text. When the copied material is pasted into a txt or word pad file, you get just the text.

Save the word pad or txt document. We will work with this later. Log off the internet and open Metastock. Open up the word pad or text document and keep it running in the background. In this example we are dealing with an exploration formula that has formulas inserted in three columns and

includes a filter. We know this because we see the notation ColA, Col B etc.

Open the Explorer in Metastock, and from the right hand menu, select NEW. As soon as the next screen comes up it is a good idea to give

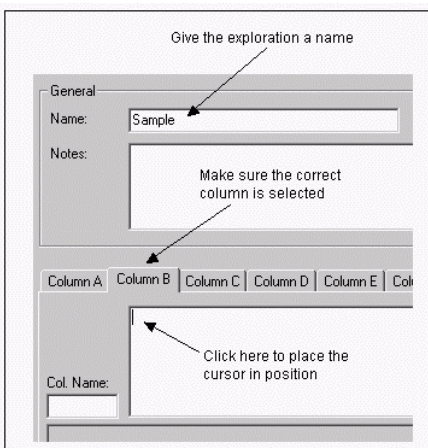
ColA. Close c
ColB Trigger If(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP0")=1,H+.05, If(Ref(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP0")),-1)=1,Ref(H,-1)+.05, If(Ref(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP0")),-2)=1,Ref(H,-2)+.05, If(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP0"))=-1,L-.05, If(Ref(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP0")),-1)=-1,Ref(L,-1)-.05,If(Ref(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP0")),-2)=-1,Ref(L,-2)-.05,0)))))
ColC Signal If(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP0"))=1,1, If(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP0"))=-1,-1,If(Ref(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP0")),-1)=1,2,If(Ref(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP0")),-1)=-1,-2,If(Ref(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP0")),-2)=1,3,If(Ref(Fml("DS_EMA_X_MP0")),-2)=-1,-3,0)))))
 Filter: When(v,>=,500000)AND When(ADX(14),>,mov(adx(14),8,e))AND When(colC<> 0)

the exploration a name immediately. This stops you from accidentally saving yet another exploration with the name NEW EXPLORATION. Leaver this screen open, and then bring the txt or WordPad file to the front. Do this by using the windows task bar.

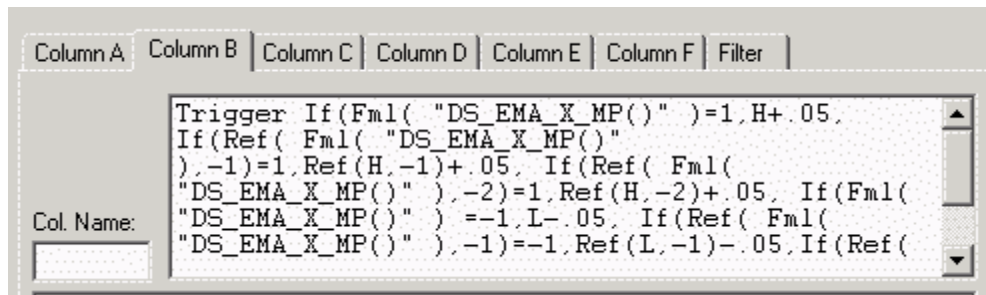
PASTING INTO METASTOCK

In this example we are going to start with the information that belongs in column B, because this is a complex string of conditional formulas. In the text printout above we have shown the column headers in Bold. This will not happen in a txt or word pad file. The key thing to remember is to highlight all the information AFTER the words ColB. If you include the words

ColB, or Column B, then the formula will not work. These are a guide to tell you which column the information should be pasted in.

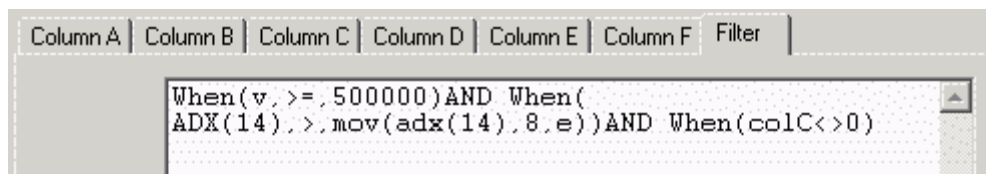


Once highlighted, select COPY from the file menu, and then switch back to Metastock. Make sure that the section Column B is selected in the Metastock display. Place the cursor in the blank window and click. The cursor should be blinking in the upper right hand corner of the screen. Now you can paste the information. This is a little difficult because there is no menu PASTE command. Instead use the keyboard shortcut. Press Ctrl and while Ctrl is held down, press V and the material will be pasted into the box. It is important to make sure the formula starts at the very top left hand corner of the screen. Leave a space here and sometimes Metastock will send you an error message when you try to use the formula.



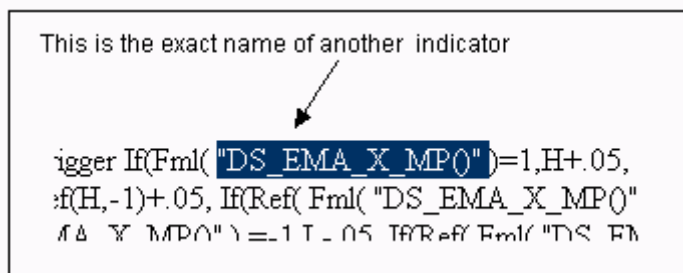
way. Make sure the Filter section is selected, then highlight the filter details. Do not include the words filter.

When you have pasted all the material then select OK from the Exploration menu. If your pasting is accurate and the formula correct the screen will close, taking you back to the main exploration screen. Your new exploration formula will appear in the exploration list. The exploration is automatically saved by



Metastock.

This same process is used to transfer systems tests, indicators and expert systems into Metastock.



specified indicator. To find this it looks for the exact name - DS_EMA_X_MP() – as shown between the inverted commas. With some explorations you may need to first create the base indicators which are used. If you do not do this you will get a message saying “No indicator names in the indicator builder contain this text.”

You can still save the exploration, but you will not get any results when you run it. Create the necessary indicators, and make sure the names are spelt exactly the same way as in the exploration formula, and with the same spacing.

Did you find this article useful? It is typical of the practical and useful articles in our weekly newsletter. Try our free trial period for 4 weeks. Go to <http://www.guppytraders.com/trialNews.htm> or take out a no risk subscription immediately at <http://www.guppytraders.com/gup15.htm>