

Re: firefox handling of apostrophe in www address?

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Source: <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/Fedora/2008-01/msg02166.html>

- *From:* Tim <ignored_mailbox@xxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Wed, 16 Jan 2008 11:42:16 +1030
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On Tue, 2008-01-15 at 09:45 +0000, William John Murray wrote:

My employers have just produced a WWW link with a name like:
"private.xx.yy/bad name/really bad name's.doc"

Basically, they've shot themselves in the foot with a really stupid thing. You can't just do as you please. It doesn't matter how much they dislike it, when you do dumb things, dumb things happen.

If I click in firefox under fedora 8 I get a 404 for
"private.xx.yy/bad%20name/really%20bad%20name"

What do you mean by "click"? A link in a webpage? If so, that's going to be a HTML problem.

e.g. Example source for a link: `go here`

The quote marks around the URI can be single or double, and it uses the ASCII apostrophe and ASCII quotes. An apostrophe in the middle of a link will upset the parsing of the attribute.

If the webserver allows the apostrophe to be used as just another character in a filename, then the link in the page should be written using %27 instead of ' in the HTML. Likewise for the spaces being written in the HTML as %20.

If I type into the title bar
"private.xx.yy/bad%20name/really%20bad%20name\'s.doc"
openoffice opens a document containing: "500 internal server error"

If I type such an address into my browser, it looks for what I asked for (the requested address remains "as is"), and I get a 404 if I don't have such a file, or I get the file if it does exist.

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The rules for what can go into a URI are different for what can go into HTML, or how you handle it is different. e.g. URIs can include the ampersand character (&), it's used as a delimiter between parameters. But in HTML it's the beginning of a character entity. To use an & in an address written in HTML to be sent as the & parameter separator, you encode it as "&";. To use an & in an address written in HTML to be sent as a & as a character in an address, you encode it as "%26".

A number of characters are reserved for special purposes in URIs, the apostrophe is one of them. Reserved doesn't necessarily mean forbidden, but it may do, or the configuration of the server software might be the deciding factor.

You have to know these rules when running a webserver. If you don't, then you've no business running one.

If I use a certain other operating system, firefox translates the apostrophe into %27 and does get the file.

That would also be okay, so long as the apostrophe is a character in the name, rather than something else (e.g. a parameter separator). Encoded characters are equivalent to the actual character.

```
[tim@bigblack ~]$ uname -ipr
2.6.23.12-52.fc7 i686 i386
```

Don't send private replies to my address, the mailbox is ignored.
I read messages from the public lists.

The sky is not falling!

fedora-list mailing list
fedora-list@xxxxxxxxxx
To unsubscribe: <https://www.redhat.com/mailman/listinfo/fedora-list>