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KNOWLEDGE BASE ARTICLE

How to Add Custom User Profile Attributes to the Employee Directory Web Part

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This article explains how to show custom **SharePoint user profile** properties in the Vitextra Employee Directory **web part** when it uses the **User profiles** data source: how to prepare the property in SharePoint, how to make it available through search, and how to add it to the web part as a custom column.

Introduction

Besides the built-in fields (name, job title, department, phones and so on), the Employee Directory web part can show any additional attribute you need - a cost center, an employee number, a building, a hobby. These additional attributes are called **custom columns** and are configured in the **Custom Columns** editor of the web part.

With the **User profiles** data source, the web part reads employee data through SharePoint search. A custom user profile property therefore becomes available to the web part only after it is indexed by search and mapped to a **managed property**. The whole process takes three steps:

1 Create (or reuse) a user profile property and make it indexed.
2 Map its **crawled property** to a retrievable managed property in the **search schema**.
3 Add the managed property to the web part as a custom column.

Tip

If the web part reads data from **Microsoft Entra ID** (the **Employee Directory (Entra ID)** web part, or **Employee Directory** with the **Entra ID (Azure AD)** data source), custom attributes work differently. See KB10060. How to Display Custom Entra ID Attributes in the Employee Directory Web Part.

Prepare the user profile property

The steps in this section are done in the **SharePoint admin center** and require SharePoint administrator rights. If the property you want to show already exists and is mapped to a managed property, skip to **Add the custom column to the web part**.

Create the user profile property

1 In the SharePoint admin center, go to **More features**, and under **User profiles** select **Open**.
2 Under **People**, select **Manage User Properties**, and then select **New Property**.
3 Enter the **Name** (the internal name, for example `CostCenter`), the **Display Name** and the **Type**.
4 Under **Search Settings**, select **Indexed**. Without this option the property is not

crawled and can't be shown by the web part.

5 Set the policy and edit settings as your organization requires and select **OK**.

Fill in the property for your users - in the profile, by your import process or by a script. Search creates the crawled property `People:<Name>` (for example `People:CostCenter`) when it crawls profiles that have a value for the property.

Tip

See the How to Create a Custom Searchable User Profile Property guide for more details.

Map it to a managed property

1 In the SharePoint admin center, go to **More features**, and under **Search** select **Open**.
2 Select **Manage Search Schema**.
3 Choose a managed property for the value. The easiest option is one of the unused built-in properties `RefinableString00`–`RefinableString99`: they are already queryable, retrievable, refinable and sortable. You can also create a new managed property of type **Text** with the **Retrievable** option turned on.
4 Open the managed property, and under **Mappings to crawled properties** select **Add a Mapping**, find `People:<Name>` and add it.
5 Save the managed property.

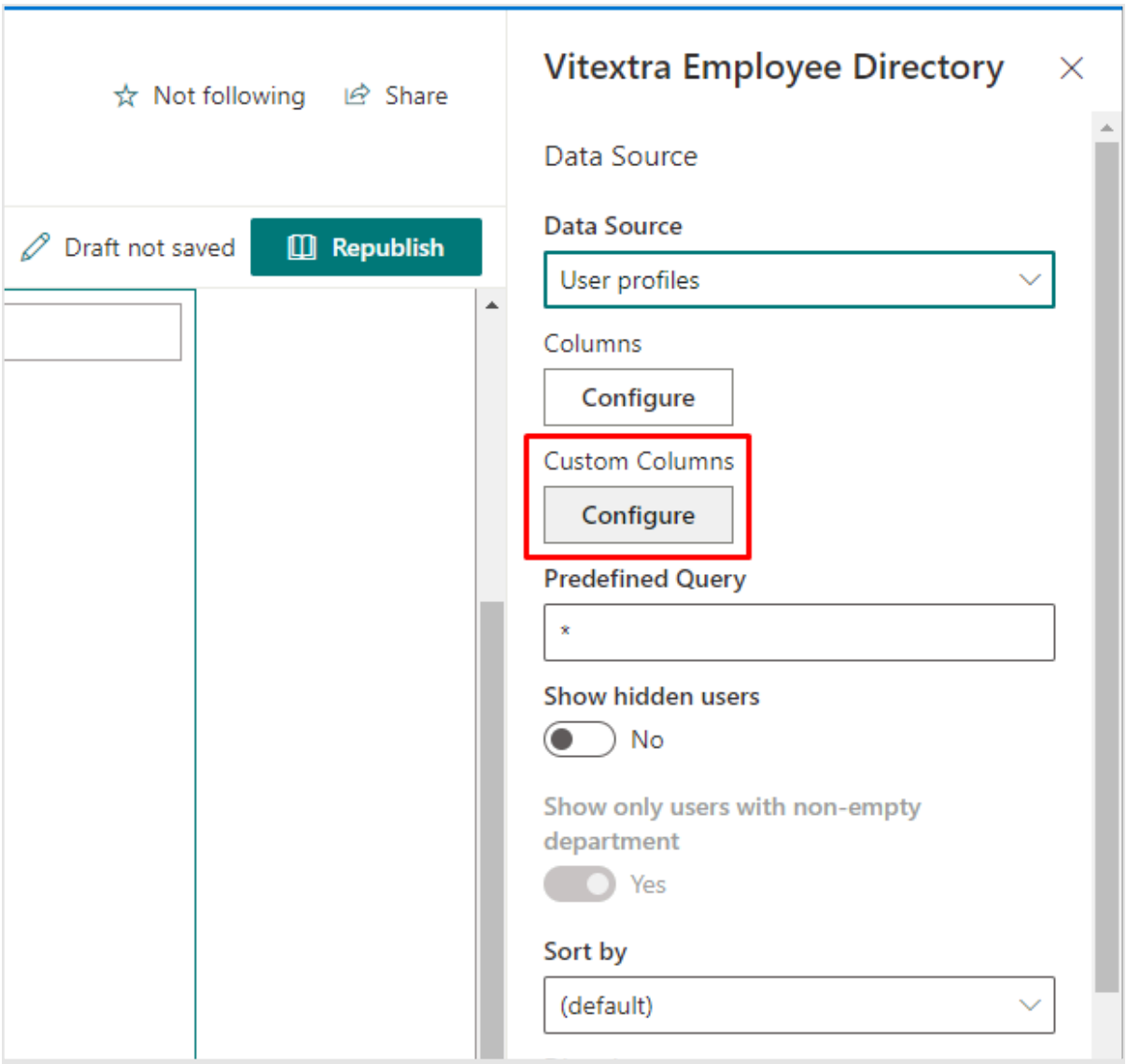
Warning

The managed property must be **Retrievable**; otherwise search does not return its value and the custom column stays empty. Changes to the search schema take effect only after the user profiles are crawled again, which can take from several hours to a day or more in large tenants.

Write down the exact name of the managed property, for example `RefinableString05` - you'll enter it in the web part.

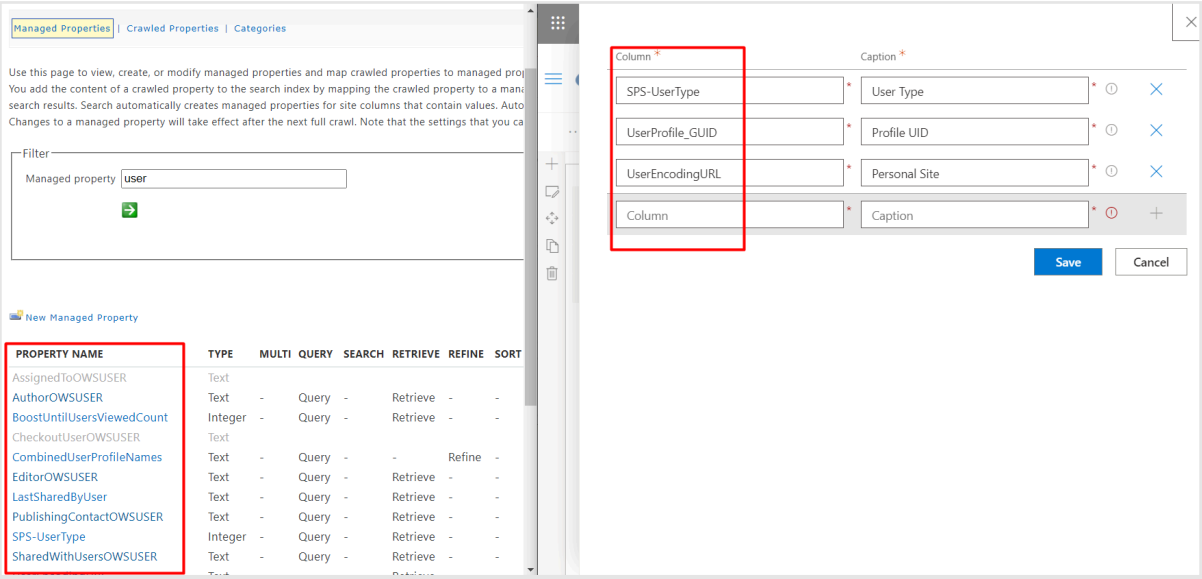
Add the custom column to the web part

1 Open the page with the Employee Directory web part, select **Edit**, and then select the edit (pencil) icon of the web part to open its property pane.
2 In the **Data Source** section, make sure **Data Source** is set to **User profiles**.
3 Under **Custom Columns**, select **Configure**.



The Custom Columns property in the Data Source section

1 The **Columns** panel opens. In the empty row at the bottom of the table, enter the managed property name in **Column** and the label your users will see in **Caption**, and choose where the column is shown.
2 Select **Add new item** (the plus icon at the end of the row). The column is added to the table. Repeat for each attribute you need.
3 Use **Order** to change the position of the columns, and select **Save**.
4 Republish the page.



Custom columns for the User profiles data source

Each custom column has the following settings:

Setting	Description
list	Shows the attribute as a column in the **Details view** and includes it in the Excel export. Selected by default for a new row.
Show on card	Shows the attribute in the employee details pane that opens when you select a person.
Column	The managed property name, for example `RefinableString05`. Enter it exactly as it is spelled in the search schema. Required.
Caption	The label shown as the column header and in the details pane, for example *Cost Center*. Required.
Order	The position of the column among the custom columns. Custom columns are placed after the built-in columns.

To remove a custom column, select **Delete Row** (the trash can icon) at the end of its

row and then select **Save**. **Cancel** closes the panel without applying your changes.

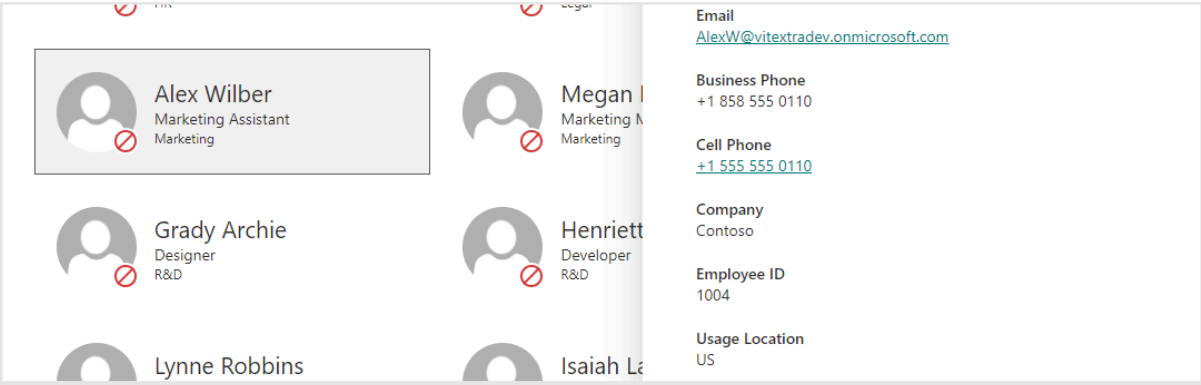
Note

The **Employee Directory** web part keeps one list of custom columns for both data sources. If you switch **Data Source** between **User profiles** and **Entra ID (Azure AD)**, review the custom columns: managed property names are valid only for **User profiles**.

Where custom columns appear

Once saved, a custom column can be used in the same places as the built-in fields:

- **Details view** - as a column of the list, when **Show in list** is selected.
- **Details pane** - below the built-in attributes, when **Show on card** is selected and the person has a value. See KB10199. Employee Directory: Customizing the Details Pane.
- **Contact cards** - as one of the card lines selected in the **Content Fields** section.
- **Group by** - the **Group by** dropdown in the **Appearance** section lists every custom column, so you can group people by, for example, cost center or building.
- **Export to Excel** - columns with **Show in list** selected are included in the exported spreadsheet.
- **Refinement panel** - a refinable managed property (such as `RefinableString05`) can also be added as a **refiner**. See KB10313. How to Set Up the Refinement Panel in Employee Directory.



Custom attributes in the details pane

Tip

For layouts, card fields and grouping, see KB10314. Employee Directory Layouts: Details and Cards, Card Size, Card Fields and Group By. For the export, see KB10062. How to Export Employee Directory Results to Microsoft Excel.

If a custom column is empty

If the column or the details pane shows no value, check the following:

- The user profile property is marked **Indexed**, and the person actually has a value for it.
- The crawled property `People:<Name>` is mapped to the managed property, and the managed property is **Retrievable**.
- Profiles have been crawled since you changed the search schema - new mappings are not applied immediately.
- The name in **Column** matches the managed property name exactly.

The details pane shows a custom attribute only when it contains data, so an empty value is simply not displayed.

Microsoft Entra ID data source

When the web part reads data from Microsoft Entra ID through **Microsoft Graph**, a custom column refers to a property of the Entra ID user object - a standard user property, a directory extension (`extension_{appId}_{name}`) or one of the on-premises **extension attributes** `extensionAttribute1`–`extensionAttribute15` - instead of a managed property. The search schema is not involved.

Tip

For the supported attribute types, how to find their names and the extra **Searchable** option of the Employee Directory (Entra ID) web part, see KB10060. How to Display Custom Entra ID Attributes in the Employee Directory Web Part.

Terms

Crawled Property
A crawled property in SharePoint search stores content and metadata that the crawler extracts from an item, such as the text of a document, its author, or its title. A crawled property is not retrievable in search results but can be mapped to one or more managed properties.

Extension Attributes
Extension attributes in Microsoft Entra ID are additional properties that can be added to the default set of attributes provided by the service. They allow organizations to extend the Microsoft Entra ID schema with custom data fields that are specific to their business needs.

Microsoft Entra ID
Microsoft Entra ID (formerly Azure Active Directory) is a cloud-based identity and access management service offered by Microsoft. It allows organizations to efficiently manage and secure their users' identities and access to a variety of resources, both internal and external. These resources include Microsoft 365, the Azure platform, and thousands of other software-as-a-service (SaaS) applications.

Microsoft Graph
Microsoft Graph is a REST API secured with Microsoft Entra ID (formerly Azure Active Directory) and OAuth 2.0. It provides a single endpoint for accessing data and services in Microsoft 365, such as SharePoint, Outlook, OneDrive, Teams, and others.

Refiner
A refiner is a filter on a search results page that lets users narrow down the results by values of a managed property, such as file type, author, or modified date.

Search Schema
The search schema defines how crawled content is indexed and shown in results by mapping crawled properties to managed properties and by configuring their settings, such as searchable, queryable, retrievable, and refinable.

SharePoint
SharePoint is a web-based collaboration platform that provides content management,

document management, workflow applications, search, and other tools that empower employees and teams to work together. SharePoint is also a secure place to store, organize, and access shared information.

SharePoint Admin Center
The SharePoint admin center is the web portal where SharePoint administrators manage sites, sharing and access settings, the App Catalog, storage, and other SharePoint Online settings for the tenant.

User Profile
A user profile is a set of properties that describe a user. The properties include basic information about the user, contact details, and other data. The user profile is used by services such as Delve, My Site, and others.

View
A view is a saved configuration that determines which items of a list or library are displayed and how, including the columns, sorting, filtering, grouping, and layout. Views can be personal or public.

Web Part
A web part is a primary building block of functionality or content placed on a SharePoint page. Some web parts support customization, such as configuring the web part or changing its appearance.