

LESSON 195

ZIP IT - FREE COPY & BACKUP UTILITY

One of the most frustrating things we do with our computers is to copy files and folders to floppy disks. The problem is that Windows doesn't know what to do when a floppy disk gets filled. Windows can't stop the copy process and prompt you to remove the floppy disk and insert a second disk so the copy process can continue.

One easy solution is to use a program called Zipit.exe. Zipit.exe was written in 1993 as a free-ware program. Fortunately, Zipit.exe is available as a free download at AM.net/lib/TOOLS/MISC/Compress. Download the program to your Windows folder (C:\windows) and it will be available for you no matter where you are in Windows.

Zip it works best in a DOS environment. It has a unique feature called "Hibernate" that will compress a folder and all of its sub-folders into one file. The original files are then removed, making more space available on your hard disk. The original files and folders can easily be restored.

By typing Zip it and pressing the Enter key, you'll see a list of instructions and switches that you can add to the command line prompt to copy files. For example, the command "Zip it c:\mydocu~1*. * a: /s" will copy the folder My Documents to your A: or floppy drive. The /S switch tells Zip it to include any sub-folders under it. I used "mydocu~1" because DOS can only recognize the first 8 characters of a file name. I added the tilde (~) character and the number 1 after the first 6 characters of the folder My Documents. Zip it will, with this command, copy the entire My Documents folder. As a floppy disk fills up, Zip it will prompt you to remove the existing floppy disk and insert a fresh one.

If you don't assign a name to the new compressed file that contains the files you copied, Zip it will assign the name Presto.exe to it. To restore the file, from the DOS mode, type "Presto /r" (without the quotes) and press Enter. The /R switch will restore the files you zipped to their original locations. Other switches let you restore to folders or directories other than the original.

Zip it is a very useful file copy and backup utility. When you have finished working with Zip it, type, "Exit" (without the quotes) and press the Enter key to return to Windows.

