DizTool Help Contents

This is the DizTool help Table of Contents. DizTool is a program, which runs under Windows, making it easy for a shareware author to create the FILE_ID.DIZ file used to describe file archives. This program allows you to open, create, edit, and save a FILE_ID.DIZ file to any drive or directory on your system.

This is the Windows 95 version of DizTool, compiled as a 32-bit program. If you are running Windows 95 on your system, this is the correct version to use. This version may also run under Windows NT, but has not been tested with Windows NT.

The FILE_ID.DIZ is used by most popular BBS software to describe   files which are uploaded to the system, rather than the description supplied by the person uploading the file.

For help on using Windows Help, press F1.

Getting started with DizTool.

What is FILE_ID.DIZ?

Creating a new FILE_ID.DIZ file.

The FILE_ID.DIZ format.

Registering your copy of DizTool.

FILE_ID.DIZ Format

The FILE_ID.DIZ file consists of the following parts:

1. The proper name that you have given your program.

2. The version number of these specific program files.

3. The ASP identifier, if you are a member of ASP.

4. The description separator, -.

5. The description of the file.

All of the above parts should be separated from each other by a single space. Parts one through four should be on the first line. DizTool will automatically create and format the first line of the file for you, based upon the information you enter in the New dialog.

PROGRAM NAME

To set it apart from the rest of the file, it is recommended that you use ALL CAPS for the program name. DizTool will automatically insert the program name in ALL CAPS.

VERSION NUMBER

The version number should be in the form of v1.50. DizTool will automatically format and insert the version number in the first line.

ASP IDENTIFIER

If you are an ASP author, it is recommended that an <ASP> identifying mark should be added after the version number. DizTool will automatically insert the <ASP> mark if you check the ASP checkbox on the New dialog box.

DESCRIPTION SEPARATOR

To separate the actual description text from the previous parts, insert a simple -(dash/minus) character after the ASP identifier (or version number if you are not using the ASP identifier) and before the start of the description text. DizTool will automatically insert this separator.

DESCRIPTION

In the description, you should attempt to describe your program as FULLY as possible in the space available, including the most important features and function. Emphasize those things which will separate your program from its competition, and give the BBS user a reason to want to download your file. Try to include the hardware and software your program needs to run.

The first two lines of the text should give a basic description of the program.   This will be helpful for those systems where the software only supports less than 10 lines, 45 characters. Systems which are limited to using shorter descriptions can simply use the first two lines, and truncate the rest. So, you can still supply your own description for systems which dont actually use the FILE_ID.DIZ.

The remainder of the file can be used to elaborate on the features, enhancements over prior versions, and other similar. You should keep in mind that some older BBS software can only use 8 lines of text from the FILE-ID.DIZ file. You should try to create a file which can be trunicated at various lengths

without destroying its usefulness.

If your distribution archive requires multiple archive files, you should create a separate, specific FILE_ID.DIZ for each archive. These files can be used to describe the contents of each archive, and identify each disk or archive in the set.

Additional Information:

You should not use any sort of graphics or ANSI sequences in a FILE_ID.DIZ file. Most BBS system software will reject them, and it will render your FILE_ID.DIZ file useless. Also, dont just copy your program description file to the FILE_ID.DIZ file, use DizTool to correctly create your file.

Getting Started

When you first start DizTool, the main window will open:

Click on each control to see its function.

When the main window of DizTool opens, you will see a listbox, a textbox, and several buttons. These controls will allow you to create, open, edit, and save FILE_ID.DIZ files.

The contents of the FILE_ID.DIZ file will be displayed in the FILE_ID.DIZ Contents window, which is a listbox. This will allow you to select individual lines in the file, for editing or deletion.

There are two modes of operation of DizTool, Edit Mode and View Mode. The difference between the two is mainly in the operation of the Edit Line textbox. When the program is in View mode, the Edit Line is used to create a new line to add to the file.

When the program is in Edit mode, the text of any line you click on in the display window will appear in the edit line. Any typing or editing you do in the Edit Line textbox will be reflected in the display window. This allows you to change or edit an existing line, which has already been added to the display window, or been part of a previously existing file.

Once you have completed your FILE_ID.DIZ file, you can save the file to disk using the Save button. When you click this button, a standard file save dialog will open, allowing you to save your file to disk. The default filename displayed in the dialog is FILE_ID.DIZ, but you can change this to another name if you wish. However, if you use different name, you will have to rename the file to FILE_ID.DIZ when it is compressed into your distribution archive.

Registering DizTool

COPYRIGHT

DizTool is Shareware, it is not free. The program is copyrighted by the authors, Richard Buttars and Robin Vo, who reserve all rights. Unregistered users are only granted a limited license to use the program for a limited evaluation period, after which they must either register, or cease using the program.

LICENSE

You are granted a limited license to use DizTool for a period of 30 days, for evaluation. If after 30 days you wish to continue using DizTool, you must register. If you decide not to register then you must cease using DizTool, and delete all its files from your computer.

REGISTRATION

If you wish to register your copy of DizTool, send $10.00 to:

Robin Vo
P.O. Box 13123
Coyote, CA 95013

Please make your check or money order payable to: Robin Vo

HELP & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

If you have a question or comment about DizTool, or encounter a problem, you can reach the authors by either e-mail, or regular mail. If you wish to contact the authors by e-mail, use the following address:

72672.2240@compuserve.com

If you want to contact the authors by regular mail, you should send your letter to the registration address above.

The authors welcome your questions and comments, as well as suggestions for improvements.

Creating A New FILE_ID.DIZ File

To create a new FILE_ID.DIZ file, click the New button in the main DizTool Window. This will open the new dialog box:

Click on each control to see its function.

The first step in creating a new FILE_ID.DIZ file is to enter the program name in the Program Name textbox. The lenth of the program name is limited to 35 characters, to ensure there will be sufficient space for all parts needed for the first line of the file. If your programs name exceeds 35 characters in lenth, you should create a shorter name.

Enter the major number of the version number of your program in the major number   textbox and the minor number of the version number in the minor number textbox. The numbers you enter will be inserted into the first line of the FILE_ID.DIZ in the form ver. 1.0.

If you are a member of ASP, check the ASP checkbox. This will insert the <ASP> mark into the first line of the file.

Type the name of your program in this textbox. The name will automatically be pasted into the file in ALL CAPS.

Click this button to accept your new information, and paste it into the file listing window.

Click this button to cancel the creation of a new FILE_ID.DIZ.

Click this button to view help for creating a new FILE_ID.DIZ.

Enter the major number of the version number in this textbox.

Enter the minor number of the version number in this textbox.

Check this checkbox if you are an ASP member. This will insert <ASP> in the first line of the FILE_ID.DIZ.

This window displays the contents of the FILE_ID.DIZ. You can click on any single line to edit or delete it.

This textbox will display the contents of the selected line, if in edit mode. If in view mode, this textboxs contents will be inserted into the file when the Add button is clicked.

This button will close the DizTool Window, and exit the program. Use this control when you are finished editing FILE_ID.DIZ files.

What Is FILE_ID.DIZ?

The FILE_ID.DIZ file is a straight ASCII text file, included inside your distribution archive along with the rest of your program files, which contains a description of your program. Most BBS(Bulletin Board Systems) software used the FILE_ID.DIZ to provide an online description of your program. It is reccomended that FILE_ID.DIZ be used in all distribution archives.

Why Should FILE_ID.DIZ Be Used

The use of this file will ensure the online description of your program will be in your own words(Who can describe your program better than you?), and it will remain the same no matter what system it is uploaded onto.

The ASP Hub Network, the Author Direct FDN(File Distribution Network), and the majority of other distribution services **require** that a valid FILE_ID.DIZ file be contained in any archive submitted for distribution. If your archive doesnt have one, then it simply wont be distributed by those services. In addition, many BBS sysops will not accept files for upload unless they contain a valid FILE_ID.DIZ, so youll lose out on that distribution method as well.

The FILE_ID.DIZ file was created by Clark Development for use with their PCBDescribe utility, as a means for shareware authors to provide a description of their products, and allowing BBS callers to upload the file without having to manually type in a description of the program.

As long as a software author creates and includes a FILE_ID.DIZ file with their distribution archive, the text from the file will be used for the online description(in most systems) instead of anything typed in by the uploader. This will ensure the online description is the same no metter where the file is uploaded to, and no matter who uploads it. FILE_ID.DIZ has become the de-facto standard for most BBS systems and online services.(The extension DIZ stands for Description In Zip).

Note

The FILE_ID.DIZ must be named exactly that, and not something else like <filename>.DIZ. The file will only be used if its named FILE_ID.DIZ.

Details

The FILE_ID.DIZ is just a straight ASCII text file which contains the full description of the archive which contains it. Its used by most of the popular BBS software packages to describe uploaded files, instead of using the description typed by the person uploading the file. The file should be placed **inside** the distribution archive. The FILE_ID.DIZ file is defined by its creators(Clark Development) as a file which is created by the programs author, and **not** the end user who is uploading the archive.

The BBS software will look inside the archive after uploading is complete. If a FILE_ID.DIZ file is found, the description it contains will be used in place of any description which might have been typed in by the uploader. Its an excelent way to ensure that your program is described the way **you** want it to be described. Even those BBS sysops whos software doesnt directly support the FILE_ID.DIZ will manually use the description contrained in the file for the online description of your program.

This button will open a file save dialog, allowing you to save your completed FILE_ID.DIZ file to disk. The default file name is FILE_ID.DIZ, but the dialog allows you to change it to something else. You can also use the dialog to change to another directory or drive.

This button will open a dialog box allowing you to enter the information to create a properly formatted first line of your FILE_ID.DIZ. Any text already inside the display window will be cleared to allow the creation of a new file.

This button will add whatever text which has been entered into the edit line as a new line in the display window.

This button will delete the selected line in the view window.

This button will display the contents topic of this help file.

This button toggles between the View and Edit modes.

This button will display a file open dialog, allowing you to open an existing FILE_ID.DIZ for editing. When you select OK, the file will be loaded into the view window.

This label will display the current mode of DizTool. The two possible modes are View and Edit.