

DFerase

Version 1.0

Copyright © 1992 by David Hirsh

This utility may be freely distributed as long as application/docs are bundled.

**** SHAREWARE ****

DFerase was written to allow users of 'personalized' applications to change the personalization information. The most common applications which feature this are MS Excel and Word. Personalization was started as a sort of copy protection by software vendors a few years back. What the vendors didn't consider was the fact that computer ownership changes as well as software. This is especially true in the corporate world where a computer can pass from person to person and department to department. The personalization data should be able to be changed as well. Until now there has been no easy way of achieving this. Users had to make use of risky disk block editors and gamble that they modified the right blocks/parameters and software companies started to encrypt the personal data to make changing even harder. The only real solution is to force the application to think it is being reinstalled from scratch and get it to reprompt for the user data. Often times the personal data is collected at installation and not only written out to the application but back to the installation disk(s) as well. Fortunately, most vendors implement their method by making use of a files' data fork to store the personalization information. Once the correct file is located DFerase simply clears out the data fork causing the application to reset and reprompt when it is run.

Locating the correct file to DFerase can involve some detective work on the part of the user. Sometimes it can be a simple process of elimination. Using a block editor to READ a files data fork is the quickest way. If an application has a small data fork (1-3 blocks) chance are it has the user data in it. If you see the ASCII user data you entered the chances are greater that that is the file to DFerase. If the vendor has chosen to encrypt the user data then you'll have to try the hit & miss approach and Dferase the application, setup

and preference files. It is possible to see the ASCII user data in more than one of the application/support files.

REMEMBER !!! Make a copy of any file you plan on DFerasing. If it turns out to be the wrong file you can corrupt/destroy the application.

Here are some known Dferase application 'fixes':

MS Word 5.0

DFerase the application file 'Microsoft Word'. When you restart Word it will prompt for the user information then prompt you for the #1 floppy disk in the install set so that it can update the personal information on it.

MS Excel 3.0/4.0

DFerase the 'Microsoft Excel Setup' file on the first install floppy disk. Run the install procedure to reinstall Excel and it will prompt for the user information and change the information in the newly installed copy.

If you come across any new 'fixes' for other applications please share them and send me a copy via email if possible. I'll add them to a revised user guide that I'll put out each month or so.

This is a shareware product and I do ask a \$5 fee if you make use of this utility. Please send fee to:

Dave Hirsh
1027 Stratford Court
Loveland, OH 45140

Thanks.....

email: usr9528a@tso.uc.edu