

Revisionist



Revisionist is a simple revision control tool that allows you to store different revisions of arbitrary documents in so-called "archive files". Revisionist stores different revisions of any types of files (not only text files) in a space efficient manner (about 5 % of the full file size per revision).

How to use Revisionist:

After you have created an archive file you can check-in an unlimited number of revisions of a document by pressing the *Add* button or choosing the *Add* command from the *Revision* menu. Upon check-in you are asked to enter a comment that should describe the revision just being checked-in. All revisions are stored together with the comments in the archive file. The creation and modification date, type and creator as well as the original file name are stored automatically by Revisionist.

All the revisions included in the archive file are shown in a list together with its original file name, comment file type, creator, creation and modification date and the check-in-date. You can extract a specific revision by selecting it and the pressing the Extract button or choosing the *Extract* command from the *Revision* menu . A simple double click on the revision entry in the list also extracts the revision clicked on.

How Revisionist works:

Revisionist uses a delta storage technique to store the different revisions of your document in a space efficient way. The overhead for the different revisions of the document depends on the mass and kind of changes you made and on the method your application saves its documents. Some applications (e. g. MacWrite, MS Word) compact its documents depending on its contents and the change of one character can lead to a totally different file. In this case the resulting delta will be big, although mostly significant smaller than a second full version. In our tests we achieved very good results e.g. with the word processor WriteNow. On an average Revisionist needs about 5 % of the original file size to store one revision.

Hardware/Software Requirements:

Revisionist has been tested by several persons on Mac+, MacSE, MacII, MacIICx and MacIISI under System 6.0.x and System 7.0 without any problems.

Memory Considerations:

You should give as much memory as possible to Revisionist to speed up the check-in-process. A good rule of thumb is to set the memory size at least to 200 KB plus four times the size of the file to be checked in. The default setting of 1024 KB therefore allows you to process files up to about 200 KB.

Files contained in the Revisionist package:

- the application "Revisionist" (standard application, running on any Macintosh)
- the application "Revisionist/20,30" (extra fast application, running only on 68020 and 68030 machines)
- the documentation (the document you are just reading).

Known bugs and planned improvements:

If Revisionist has not enough memory during the check-in process you are informed by means of an alert box and the application will be quitted. Your archive file remains unchanged, but there will be two temporary files left in the same folder where your archive file is. In this case just drag the two files into the trash, increase the memory size for Revisionist and retry the check-in.

Revisionist is just an intermediate result on my way to a full version control tool. At present this full version control tool is being implemented. It will be able to handle variants and revisions of whole software projects (including the project structure by means of a project structure tree) and will offer some other nice features. It should be available next summer.

Registered users should feel free to contact me if there are any problems.

How To Use Revisionist Legally:

Revisionist is distributed on a shareware basis. You are encouraged to test it thoroughly before deciding whether Revisionist is worth to be used or not. If you decide to keep it, send US\$ 30 (or the equivalent in your local currency) in form of a check or in cash (cash is preferred due to lower bank charges) to

Christoph Reichenberger
Erlenweg 2
A – 4320 Perg
Austria (Europe)

This is also the address where you should write to, if you encounter any problems. You can reach me also under the following EMail addresses:

chrei@soft.uni-linz.ac.at <-- this one is preferred!
chrei@edvz.uni-linz.ac.at
K331670@ALIJKU11.BITNET

Once you are a registered user of Revisionist, you will receive informations about new versions, as soon as they become available. New versions can then be obtained by sending US\$ 15.– (just to cover my shipping expenses) to the above address.

If you are not willing to pay or if there is any other reason for not using Revisionist (although I cannot imagine any reason), you should remove Revisionist from all of your disks. However, you should give Revisionist to as many Macintosh users as possible, before you finally get rid of it.

When passing Revisionist to other Macintosh users, you must copy the whole "Revisionist" package containing:

- the application "Revisionist"
- the application "Revisionist/20,30"
- the documentation (MacWrite and Text)

Version History:

V 1.1 implements a much faster Algorithm for reconstructing earlier versions.