Updating my Mansion System to .....

"BBS in a BOX" Volume VII

How do I update my Mansion BBS?

The CD-ROM you now have in your CD-ROM drive, contains a wealth of information, a huge number of files. At first sight, it is very difficult to hook all this up to your Mansion system. At second sight... but no, but   that's another BBS system.

This document should make the task of making this CD-ROM available to your users a bit easier.

The creators of this CD-ROM wisely figured that there should be some simple way to define what's on the CD-ROM, a way to make it easier for you and your users to find the files of their liking. What they defined is a tab-delimited file, one copy of which you will find in each file section. For example, when you look in the folder 'MIDI' in the folder 'files' you will find a file called ' MIDI.db' (the space in front of the name helps make sure that it's on top of any list of files the finder may present to you. This file contains all the information on the MIDI part of the CD-ROM. You will find a file like this in all the folders.

The next step was simple as well. Some programmer had to take this file format, and

write something that translated it to Mansion format. That programmer turned out to be me. The utility is called "BBSinaBox' and can be found in the same folder as this document. Should you decide to disregard the prepared Section.Dir files on this CD-ROM, you can use this utility to create your own section.dir files based on the .db files.

Take the following steps.

1). All of the *.db files have been concatenated for you in the Mansion.txt file.
2). Put the Mansion.txt file on your drive in a new folder.
3). Put the inaBox utility in the same folder.
4). Create a folder called 'CD ROM' in the same folder
5). Run the utility, and select the concatenated file (Mansion.txt).
6). When it asks you to select a file again, click cancel.

You now have a couple of files. One is called Lib Header, and it contains the same lines as a normal Lib Header file. The other is called Mansion Menu Lines, and it contains the lines you can almost use for your setup. When you copy lines from this file to your menu structure, all you have to do is change the menu text to something you like better than what's put there automatically, and second you have to assign it a keystroke you callers can use to select the menu. You must remember to change one thing in the Lib Header file. For every line in the Lib Header file, there is menu file number defined (check page 10 of you Mansion manual). Default this is set to 0000. You must change this to your download menu. An example is included in the "menu's" folder.

There's also a file called 'Inabox.log' and this file contains the pathnames of all files on the CD-ROM which could not be incorporated into a Section.Dir file because of file names that are too long. The folder 'CD ROM' contains all the Section.Dir files.

Working with a CD-ROM is subtly different from working with a hard disk with Mansion. Normally, the Section.Dir files are in the same directory as the files it describes. With a CD-ROM however, this is not possible, since Mansion wants
to update this file with the number of downloads. The solution is simple (and can be found in the manual, of course...). In the Mansion Data folder on you hard disk, there's a folder called 'CD ROM'. In this folder you will find all the Section.Dir files for the directories on read-only volumes. However, instead of 'Section.Dir', the name of the file will be extended to include the number of the file section, a number you can also find in the Lib Header file. An example would thus be 'Section.Dir 1' for file area one.

Things will be simplest if you use the Section.Dir files provided on CD-ROM. They come together with a set of menu files, set up by me to represent one way of looking at the CD-ROM.

Therefore, you find on this CD-ROM not only the utility, but also it's product: a folder with Section.Dir files, the Lib Header file, and a file with Mansion Menu Lines for you to create your own menu structure. For the terminally lazy I included a folder "Menu's" as well, which contain menu's based on the Section.Dir and Lib Header files. You can use

these in combination with the Lib Header file, (and probably modify them to include your existing library area's). If you decide to use the menu's in the menu folder, you must change the Lib Header file to have all sections go to menu number 500, instead of 0000. Of course, you can also use your own generic download menu. Check page 10 of the Mansion manual.

Note that the menu's in the "Menu's" folder may also be useful as a starting point for creating your own selection of the CD-ROM. All you need to do is make sure the library section numbers are correct in all menu lines for your setup.

Have fun!   -John W. Sinteur, 2:512/114

If you do not currently own Mansion you can purchase it from:

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