

# **GuideCompilerV1.2a**

**COLLABORATORS**

	<i>TITLE :</i> GuideCompilerV1.2a		
<i>ACTION</i>	<i>NAME</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>SIGNATURE</i>
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## Chapter 1

# GuideCompilerV1.2a

### 1.1 main

```
*****
@Guide Compiler V1.2a (10/3/95)
```

```
-----
By $LiNg$HoT/DiMeNTiA
-----
```

Introduction

Standard Disclaimer

Requirements

Usage

Features

Bugs

History

TO DO

Greets

Contacting the author

```
*****
```

The legend will NEVER die!

Support @AmigaReport

```
*****
```

### 1.2 What the hell is GuideCompiler?

PLEASE READ THROUGH EACH SECTION OF THESE DOCS AS IMPORTANT INFO ←  
IS LINKED

FROM CERTAIN PAGES WHICH ARE NOT ACCESIBLE FROM THE MENU.

BROWSE> AND BROWSE< CAN BE USED TO MOVE THROUGH EACH MENU ITEM ONLY, NOT EVERY SUB SECTION!

Welcome to the wonderful world of @AmigaGuide, the superb Commodore HyperText system that makes reading text that much more enjoyable. :)

So, what is GuideCompiler?

Well, it is a program I have needed for years! Basically it will create an @AmigaGuide document and fill it with links to files in an unlimited amount of specified directories. Each file is linked to a text viewer or the @AmigaGuide program itself, with

MultiView  
being used as a default to  
viewing text files. An  
environmental variable  
is used to specify the  
standard text viewer if you wish to use something other than MultiView.

GuideCompiler will also optionally scan recursively through the source directories and build up a complex guide of all the files stored. At first this may seem pointless to some, but if you apply the idea to lets say your text directory then.....

Over the years I have built up a massive collection of text files which I store on my harddrive under a number of different categories. I have over 12 megs of files thus far, and viewing them could be tedious and long winded due to the directory structure I use. Therefore, I needed an index of all the files and a neat way of traversing the list. This is where the idea for GuideCompiler came in.

I had originally planned on writing it in C, but due to it's complex nature and the number of times my test programs kept crashing I looked for a better solution. I found it, in the form of the excellent programming language AREXX. I managed to teach myself AREXX in a week and this was the second program I attempted, which supprisingly only took 2 days to code! It goes to show how powerful and easy to use AREXX is. If you ever thought of programming the Amiga, but found C too complex, try AREXX, you wont be dissappointed! :)

Anyway, once I had learnt the basics of the language, GuideCompiler came along in leaps and bounds! You give the program a source directory and destination filename and the files are scanned and made into the destination @AmigaGuide file. The files are laid out in 3 columns and are alphabetically sorted for quicker selection.

If the ALL switch is selected the program will scan all sub-directories and build up the relevant pages. Each directory has it's own page which contains files and then the other directories if there are any. This means that tranversing a directory tree is simply a matter of clicking on the desired directory on each page until the required file is located. If multiple sources are specified a special main selection page will be created with links each of the source directories.

When a file is selected the relevant viewer will be called. @AmigaGuide will be called for any .guide files selected and by default MultiView will be used for other text files. If the

environmental variable  
is set, the  
specified text viewer in this file will be used instead of MultiView.

As of version 1.2a of GuideCompiler, a new  
global preferences  
system  
is implemented that allows configuration of some of the ways in which the  
program functions. One of these allows ANSI output to be turned off for if  
you use a shell that cant handle them, or you just dont like the look.

### 1.3 So, what is my legal status MR Cheese?

GuideCompiler is Public Domain and thus is free to be used by anyone who  
has a use for it.

You use GuideCompiler at you own risk and I cannot be held reponsible for  
any damage caused by use or misuse of the program. Not that I'm expecting  
any problems to arise, but any use of a program that reads/writes files on  
a harddrive COULD in some extreme circumstances cause problems. These  
circumstances could be hardware failure, software failure or user failure  
and should not be attributed to my program ( although bugs do occur in the  
strangest of instances ; ) )

GuideCompiler has been written in AREXX but has been compiled to protect  
the code ( not that it's amazing or anything but.. ). This not only  
protects my routines but means that it is easier to run and the user does  
not have to mess about with the RX command or script bits!

I may at some time or another decide to release the source depending on how  
I feel about it :)

GuideCompiler is written by: James Allen A.K.A SlingShot/Dimentia U.K

Feel free to

contact  
the author at any time, to discuss other uses, extra  
functionality for GuideCompiler or just to talk about AREXX!

### 1.4 What ya need..

GuideCompiler V1.2a needs:  
-----

OS2.0+  
RexxMast ( The Arexx interpreter running )  
A Harddrive  
The following AmigaDOS commands in C: ( sys:c/ )  
- SORT

---

- LIST  
- DELETE

The @AmigaGuide program in the search path. ( E.G In C: )

Why use AmigaDOS commands?  
BUT:

IF you want to use the default file viewer -  
MultiView  
, you NEED WB3.0!

If you have only got WB2 dont worry, you can still use the program by  
changing the text viewer using the  
environmental variable  
option!

## 1.5 Why have I used the DOS commands?

The following description contains technical terms which some ←  
people will  
not understand.

When I first learnt AREXX, I didnt know there was a command in the AREXX  
support library that allowed directories to be scanned and the files  
returned to a variable. Therefore I used my own technique of redirecting  
the output of the list command to RAM: and sorting it.

I now know how to use the inbuilt support function ShowDir() but I have  
decided against using it in this instance. The problem is, due to AREXX  
being an interpreted language it aint the fastest thing around. Therefore,  
just like a C coder might use the AmigaDOS functions in dos.library for  
extra speed, I have decided to use the AmigaDOS commands in C:. This  
system works faster than it would if I used ShowDir() because using that  
would involve:

1. Reading the directory into a single simple symbol. ( A Variable )
2. Splitting it up into a set of compound symbols. ( An array )
3. Sorting it using a quick sort.

Even on my 030/40Mhz this all takes alot of time in AREXX and so by using  
AmigaDOS commands the running of the program is improved. I make LIST and  
SORT resident and so they donnot need to be repeatedly loaded off disk.  
This of course takes alittle bit of memory but not much.

Using my current technique I redirect the output of list to ram creating 2  
files holding the files and the directories. I then read these into  
compound symbols. This is alot faster than using the above method, but I  
suppose reading them into an array takes alittle bit of time. Still, I am  
happy with the speed my program runs at, and dont think it could be speeded  
up much more. If it doesnt run very fast on your system,

mail me  
your

system setup as I am interested on how it runs on slower machines.

I have written a number of procedures which use the above techniques and these allow me to write other AREXX programs that need to scan directories quickly and easily.

## 1.6 So.....How do I use it then?

Before running GuideCompiler, the AREXX interpreter REXXMAST ←  
MUST be  
running. If this is not run from your Startup-sequence or User-Startup, go  
to the CLI and type:

```
sys:system/rexxmast >nil:
```

IF you want it to be run every time, place the above line in your  
startup-sequence OR user-startup. You could also merely drag the REXXMAST  
file from sys:system into your sys:WBStartUp drawer and this would have the  
same effect.

Usage is pretty straight forward. Here is the standard AmigaDOS template:

```
GuideCompiler SOURCE/M,DEST/K,ALL/S
```

```
SOURCE      - Where the Source(s) are specified.
DEST        - This is the Destination @AmigaGuide file. E.G ram:test.guide
ALL         - This switch specifies whether sub-directories are scanned.
NODATE      - Switch to stop the date and time being added to the .guide
```

Note: If you donnot supply a .guide extension, one will be appended.  
Arguments can be specified in any order.  
The date and time are added to the .guide by DEFAULT.

The program will check to see whether the  
Environmental Variable  
exists and  
if so will display the viewer specified in the file. If it does not exist  
then the program MultiView will be used.

Note: MultiView must be present in sys:utilities/ otherwise the destination  
guide will not work.

Here is an example that I use to catalogue my text directory:

```
1> GuideCompiler text: dest=text:Index.guide all
```

Please note that some of the commands used in the destination guide  
will not display correctly if using a version of AmigaGuide.library <V39  
(OS3 version). This includes Italics, underline etc...



## 1.7 What does the Environmental variable do?

To make GuideCompiler more versatile I have allowed the user to specify a text viewer if they don't want to use MultiView. The problem with MultiView is that it won't allow you to search or read packed files. To do this I use a program called XMore which is very fast and does the job very well. If the variable does not exist MultiView will be used by default.

The environmental variable must be called "GuideCompiler" and should contain on the first line the name and path ( if the program is not in the current GLOBAL search path ) of the standard text viewer to use.

For people who understand how environmental variables work, there should be no problem but if you don't know much about them [CLICK HERE](#)

## 1.8 Help! Help! I'm being repressed....

Right then...If you don't know much, even anything about Environmental variables don't worry there not very hard to understand.

When you boot up your computer, the startup-sequence does a number of different tasks. One of which is to set up an area on the Ram Disk called ENV. It then copies a number of files across from the harddisk which contain information used by different programs. This information could be anything from the size of a window a program uses, to some messages you have entered into a notebook program.

Anyway, this is where our variable containing the viewer to use is stored. To set an environmental variable you go to the CLI and type something like this:

```
1> setenv GuideCompiler dh0:text/viewers/xmore
```

This file is now stored in RAM:ENV/ as GuideCompiler. It contains on the first line the name of the text viewer GuideCompiler will use when producing the guide.

One thing you must realise is that once the computer has been reset this variable will be wiped from memory. Therefore, if you want GuideCompiler to use the same viewer all the time you must create a file actually on the harddrive. All the permanent ENV files are stored on your harddrive in:

```
- sys:prefs/env-archive
```

(sys: refers to the partition from which you booted)

This path is assigned to the logical device called - ENVARC:  
The easiest way to create a permanent env variable for GuideCompiler is to

echo the viewer name straight down ENVARC:

Using the above example we could create a permanent GuideCompiler variable using the following CLI command.

```
1> echo "dh0:text/viewers/xmore" >envarc:GuideCompiler
```

This will write the variable to the harddrive and each time the computer is reset it will be copied to RAM:ENV/ along with the other permanent variables.

You could achieve the same result by editing the file using a text editor such as ed. E.G

```
1> ed envarc:GuideCompiler
```

You would then enter a new text viewer or modify the existing one, remembering to save the file afterwards of course :).

Although the above applies to the viewer ENV variable, GuideCompiler, it can equally be applied to the global preferences variable called slingshot. It should be noted that in future versions of the

global prefs  
system, the

slingshot variable will consist of parameters on multiple lines. Therefore, the variable should be edited with a text editor, as described above.

NOTE: If you have any trouble using the variable with GuideCompiler, feel free to

mail me  
for help!

## 1.9 There arent many but it does the job I guess!

V1.2a Features:

- Builds an @AmigaGuide document of all files in a directory.
- Optionally scans all sub-directories.
- Searches for presence of \$GuideCompiler Env variable for viewer name. This avoids having to enter the viewer name on the command line.
- Links all .guides using link command so that you can use retrace to get back to the main file Index guide and to allow standard text file viewers for the other files.
- Finished Guide has a nice layout! More highlighting used and better looking header for the main front page.
- Supports multi sources so that you can specify different directories around your harddrive. E.G A guide comprising your modules and sound samples! Special title page created when using multiple sources.
- Now adds the date & time to the main page of the .guide. Can turn off with NODATE switch.
- Uses the SlingShot
  - global preferences
  - system to allow user configuration.

- Global preference option NOANSI to turn off ANSI output supported.

## 1.10 So..Why use MultiView then?

I decided to use MultiView as a default because a) it comes with the system ←  
and so everyone should have it, and b) because it is pretty versatile.

It's versatile because it uses WB3.0 datatypes and so it's not only limited to text, but can display pictures, samples etc... Now, you may be asking yourself why should displaying pictures be useful in a TEXT/GUIDE viewing program. Well, even though I have only mentioned using this program for text and guide displaying it could in theory be used to catalogue anything. With the correct datatypes installed loads of file types are supported. For example, you could catalogue your entire sample directory and multiview would play each one with a click of an @AmigaGuide button! The same could be done with your pictures directory. Basically, GuideCompiler can be used for all sorts of different cataloging tasks.

Using the Environmental Variable idea, even more file types can be supported by using other programs like MultiView. One such program is called

MegaView and is in someways more versatile than MultiView. It uses a library of filetypes and instead of telling the program how to display the file it instead calls a program the user has specified. Therefore, you determine what program is called for which filetype. The possibilities then become almost endless!

If you come up with a new way to use GuideCompiler, please tell me about it and I will put your idea in the next release of the program ( If I come up with anything to add to it :) ).

NOTE: If you have WB2.0 dont worry because you havent got MultiView, just use the

environmental variable option and specify a different text viewer or something like the aforementioned MegaView!

## 1.11 A useful program...yes indeedy..!

Just incase you want to know more about MegaView here is the address of the Author as found in the .guide for the program:

MegaView was written by Hans-Jörg Frieden in 1993.

---

DIGital DIMensions are:

Hans-Jörg Frieden	Thomas Frieden
Schloßstraße 176	Schloßstraße 176
54293 Trier	54293 Trier
Germany	Germany
Email:	
inf01@uni-trier.de	inf02@uni-trier.de
or hfrieden@treveris.uni-trier.de	tfrieden@treveris.uni-trier.de

Phone: Germany 0651/66410.

Please send questions about the main program to Hans-Joerg and questions about the FileActions editor to Thomas.

## 1.12 Arhhhhh no not them....!

KNOWN BUGS in V1.2a

-----  
- Cant handle files which have spaces in them:

The problem here is that I use the SYSTEM command in AmigaGuide. This only allows one string to be sent to the command line. This string contains the name of the viewer and the filename. If the filename has spaces in it, only the first part of the name is sent as there is no way of sending the filename in quotes :(

Have no fear. When I discovered this annoying bug, I set about coding a program that would alleviate this problem to a certain extent.

Possible Solution:

```
NameStrip
-
MultiView
cannot handle powerpacked files:
```

Not really a bug as such but if you decide to use MultiView as the default text viewer, be aware that it cannot handle powerpacked text files. This could be a problem if you pack your text ( good compression ) to save space.

Possible Solution:

Use the

```
enviornmental variable
option and choose a different text viewer.
```

## 1.13 A useful program...!

NameStrip V1.1 By \$LiNg\$HoT/DiMeNTiA U.K

---

NameStrip will scan a directory and optionally all sub-directories for all filenames which contain spaces. When it finds one, it will strip the name of spaces and tidy it up. It also handles Directory names.

E.G "dhl:text/docs/mega view.pp" would become dhl:text/docs/MegaView.pp

It's also useful because any filename with spaces which is in capitals will be changed to lowercase and looks a whole lot better ( IMHO anyway! ).

NOTE: Make sure that if you are going to use NameStrip that the files to be changed are not referenced by any assigns, scripts or other programs. If they are, you may find that after NameStrip has been run that some of your other programs stop working suddenly! Usually, a simple change of a name in a script or config file will solve the problem, but just check the directories before running NameStrip!

I have included NameStrip with the archive this program comes in. If it hasn't been included it's not an official release from me and so, you will have to get it from somewhere else (

Me!

for example ) or rename all the files with spaces in their names by hand!

## 1.14 What has been changed and added..

GuideCompiler.rexx Version History

---

V1.0 - 12/9/94 (Never Released)

- A text file AmigaGuide compiler
- Will scan a directory and it's sub-directories
- These will be made into an AmigaGuide document.
- They will be linked to MultiView for displaying.
- Each item is formatted into 3 columns with a width of 23 chars.

V1.1 - 27/9/94 (Released: 6/3/95)

- Now Links all AmigaGuide files found to the actual AmigaGuide program.
- Now an environmental variable - \$GuideCompiler is scanned for the name of the viewer program. MultiView is used if the env-variable does not exist. This allows the use of fast text viewers like XMore which handle .pp/.xpk files and allow searching.
- Fixed a bug which wrote extra @endnode's when only files found.
- Fixed a bug that caused the wrong page to be displayed if there were 2 or more directories of the same name

V1.2 - 10/3/95 (Released: 13/3/95)

- No longer links AmigaGuide files to AmigaGuide program. Just calls from within the destination guide itself. (E.G Link text:guide.guide/main)
-

- Now supports multiple source directories. (Suggested by Wangi) - Great!
- Fixed bug that would add .guide extension if destination specified had .Guide or .GuIde etc..Simple comparison change made to compare in uppercase only! ( Again spotted by Wangi ) - Cheers mate :)
- Quite a major frontend change of the destination guide. More highlighting used.
- Better argument parsing routine added. Allows more expansion options.
- Now recognises the ? ANYWHERE on input stream. AmigaDos'ish :)
- Change in template to: SOURCE/M,DEST/K,ALL/S. For K directive all(?) of the forms of input are handled. E.G dest=guide dest guide dest= guide dest =guide.
- Added date and time to the destination guide. NODATE switch used to stop this.

V1.2a - 17/3/95 (Released: )

- Fixed bug in MultiSource that would corrupt guide if a specified source directory only had directories and no files.
- Implemented
  - global preferences
  - system. NOANSI supported.

## 1.15 A new system designed to make life easier..

As of version 1.2a of GuideCompiler I have implemented an [↔](#) expandable system of global preferences. Basically this means that all of my future programs and updates will conform to a number of preferences set by the user.

These preferences will tend to be environmental ones, and affect the way in which my programs output text etc...

At the moment, only the following option is supported in GuideCompiler:

- o NOANSI - Turns OFF ansi output.

The global preference file is stored in ENV: and is called slingshot. It consists of a number of keywords placed on each line. If you don't know anything about the environmental variable system used on the Amiga (and unix ;> ) then

[click here](#)  
for some help.

Therefore to turn off ANSI output in all of my programs which support global preferences, place NOANSI on a line in env:slingshot and envarc:slingshot (if you want it to be permanent).

If anyone has any environmental options they would like to see implemented in my global prefs system, please

mail them to me  
, as I can't

really think of any new options that would be useful at the moment.

## 1.16 What next then?

- Edit button?

I've got an idea about adding a small edit button next to each entry in the guide. This will load up your favourite text editor with the file selected. The editor will probably be specified in the environmental variable. I've havent decided whether to add this until I get some feed back. SO...If you want to see it implemented,  
mail me!

## 1.17 Hi mum!

Greets go out to the following people:

Laurie Lee ( The C God ) - See! C isnt the be all and end all :))  
Dave Hollway - Money and map NOW!!! :)  
Mark & Scott/Visage Computers - What are YOU doing with one of my programs?  
Catlord - When ya gonna code a demo then.... \*)  
Draxx/Desire - Built any CrayAmigas lately?  
Darren Bloor - Psst....Got any.....dirty videos... :)  
Creator/Dimentia - Get that Babylon 5 beater finished! ;)  
KenD/LSD - See yers on mono m8.  
CounterPoint/Westower - Hey, keep those cool mods coming..  
Chalky - Was it 2 disks or 3 you gave me? ;>  
WhiteWolf - Lets sort them macs out...!!  
WolfLord - If your reading this.it must be on my home page..Get yours done!:>  
The\_Don - SO...When are we gonna get our OWN section then? ;>  
Jason Compton - Keep producing your great mag!  
Deztech - Hi Philip...So...what do you think? (I hope I remembered ya nick!)

----

IRC:

FUNdament - Hey, get that paint package done..I want to do the AREXX :)  
Secka - Wonder if we'll get banned again... ;>  
Wangi - Thanks for the ideas m8..! :)  
Xanim - Hey Terje..so when are you gonna optimise xanim then.. ;>  
Toto - B5 has the best effects... ;->

Oh and greets to all on #amiga..

AND..

All the programmers on the world wide Amiga scene, who make our machine such a joy to use.

While I'm at it, greets to ALL Amiga owners everywhere. Keep the dream alive!

## 1.18 So you want to talk to me huh? :)

Well, I hope you have found a decent use for GuideCompiler and that it has made accessing your files alot easier. I have certainly enjoyed programming it, which is quite remarkable for me considering how wound up I get when trying to figure out even the simplest of bugs that crop up ;) I think this has mainly to do with using AREXX rather than going through the agony of C! Talking of bugs, if you happen to locate any ( I'm sure there are some ) feel free to internet mail me at any time and I will try and rectify the problem if possible. For that matter if you have any comments on the program or ideas for improvement mail me them....I enjoy getting mail :))!

Right then, here are my current E-Mail addresses. They remain valid until:

Either:

- A). July/September 95' when I finish year 2 of my degree.
- B). The operators de-user me for.....Errmmmm well, I dont think we need to go into that right now \*8-}}

Mail me - James Allen - at either:

- cc022jwa01@ntu.ac.uk OR
- sys2jal@doc.ntu.ac.uk

You can also contact me on the "MonoChrome" Internet BBS run from City University London, England.

Telnet : electron.mono.ac.uk  
PAD : uk.ac.city.mono  
( When prompted, enter the above TELNET address. )

My account name is : SlingShot

I look forward to hearing from you.....

Oh and check out my WWW home page some time (Thanks Threapwood!). It has links to my programs on aminet, upcoming projects and Amiga links etc..

<http://www.york.ac.uk/~dmh11/slingshot>

-----  
Look out for my other releases ( I finally got my AREXX compiler! ) such as:

MultiVer - Scans 2 directories and compares \$VER of files.  
(Aminet: util/cli/MultiVer11.lha)  
NameStrip - Recursively scans and strips file names of spaces etc..  
DeliList - " " " and builds up a @DeliTracker2 playlist.  
(Aminet: mus/misc/DeliList11.lha)  
DeArchive - Unpacks all LHA/LZH/ZIP files into a directory automatically  
(Aminet: util/arc/DeArchive15 - Most recent)

Oh and my one released music mod is on aminet in mods/pro and is called:

---



WhoIsElvis94.lha

It's a remix of the techno track, "Who is Elvis" By Interaction.

I have also done a REKO Klondike AGA cardset. The theme is space and it is a 256 colour set. It's on Aminet as:

game/think/SpaceREKO.lha

---