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WRITTEN BY		August 7, 2022	

REVISION HISTORY

<i>NUMBER</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>NAME</i>

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Chapter 1

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1.1 AmySTP Manual: Main Menu

AmySTP

A Binary To Text Converter

Version 1.6c

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Author:
Manolis~S~Pappas

Introduction

What is all about...

Requirements

What do you need...

Installation

Well, it's pretty straightforward...

Technostuff!

For the technical minds...

~~Examples~~

For the idiot-proof...

~~Contacts~~

Get in contact...

~~Credits!~~

: -)

This program is provided "AS IS". No responsibility is taken for ANY misuse or damage caused by the use of this software. Although EVERY possible attempt was made to provide an error-free (bug-free :-)) software package, we cannot be responsible for any inconvenience this program may cause to you! USE AT YOUR OWN RISK!

1.2 AmySTP Manual: Introduction

Over the last few years, information is transferred via electronic computer networks. Data such as texts, lists and even files ARE posted between users all over the world! Expensive and accurate systems provide the average user such services.

However, sometimes you want to send a file to someone else, but that person is not able to receive files by others, just only plain text files. If the file is plain ASCII, there is no problem, but what if the requested file is binary?

A few utilities exist for that particular purpose; to allow the encoding of binary files by using plain ASCII files. The most known one is the UU Encode format, published by a user, some years ago. It is very popular, although it has some limitations and disadvantages. The most noticeable disadvantage is that such utilities, create output ASCII files MUCH bigger than the original binary files. This limits the file-exchanges very much.

Here's AmySTP comes in! It's an alternative binary to ASCII encoder which, by using special compression algorithms, can create output ASCII files with similar sizes to the original binary ones. Thus the user is able to send bigger files via e-mail messages.

1.3 AmySTP Manual: Requirements

To use AmySTP you need:

- An AMIGA® computer (well...can't do without one :-))
- KickStart 2.04 or later
- 256K RAM

Using AmySTP on bigger files may require more memory, but in any case, memory usage is very little!

1.4 AmySTP Manual: Installation

Installation of AmySTP is very simple. The package consists of two executable files; AmyStpEncoder and AmyStpDecoder. You just have to copy those files in your executable path (such as the C: directory).

To use the program, you need to access the Shell. Open a Shell window and type:

```
AmyStpEncoder <parameters>  
    to encode a file
```

```
AmyStpDecoder <parameters>  
    to decode a file
```

See also

Usage

1.5 AmySTP Manual: AmySTP Usage

Please select:

```
AmyStpEncoder  
    AmyStpEncoder Usage...
```

```
AmyStpDecoder  
    AmyStpDecoder Usage...
```

1.6 AmySTP Manual: AmyStpEncoder Usage

Usage of AmyStpEncoder is:

```
AmyStpEncoder [binary_infile] [txt_outfile] {-d=xx}
```

Explanation:

`binary_infile` is the name of the binary file to be encoded

`txt_outfile` is the name of the output ASCII file to be produced from the binary one

Two more optional parameters exist:

`-d` Specifies the length of each line in the output file produced. The smaller it gets, the bigger the output file gets. Default is 70.

NOTE: From v1.6b the `-l` parameter is no longer valid. The reason for it's removal was that 1) it produced incompatible files that the pc STP decoder did not recognize, 2) sometimes produced BIGGER files instead of smaller ones.

Thanks to Theodore Hatzikostas for pointing this out to me! :-)

1.7 AmySTP Manual: AmyStpDecoder Usage

Usage of AmyStpDecoder is:

```
AmyStpDecoder [txt_infile]
```

Explanation:

```
txt_infile is the name of the ASCII file to produced that will  
produce the binary one
```

1.8 AmySTP Manual: Technical Information

AmySTP uses a similar algorithm like the UU Encode utilities do. However, to produce smaller output ASCII files, AmySTP utilizes ASCII character codes in the range 32-255 (where UU Encode uses characters 32-127). This can cause some problems with system that do not use/provide characters 128-255.

This makes AmySTP useless if you want to transfer files via Internet mail (although there exist servers that do not have problems with this characters - check to find out if you have one).

Even if this limitation sounds terrific, AmySTP is useful. You can use it to post files via FidoNet-compatible systems. These systems were designed later than the Usenet/Internet ones, thus they permit the user to write with characters beyond 127. Using AmySTP in such networks can lower the required bandwidth extremely, so the telephone costs.

Care must be taken with FidoNet networks, also: be sure that neither your mail software (Off-Line Reader, Tosser) or your BBS does not crop ASCII characters beyond character 128 (a few badly programmed PC BBS/Editors, such as GEdit have problems). All Amiga BBS software is know to be working perfectly!

Following these simple rules, AmySTP will serve you well for a long time, without problems!

NOTE: At this time of writing (17-12-95) AmySTP has been tested under Unix and Internet mail, and reported to work fine. The best way to find out is simply by creating a STP file and posting it to yourself! That way you'll know if your provider's system accepts STP encoded files.

1.9 AmySTP Manual: Examples

Some examples of AmySTP usage:

- To encode a binary file file.ext to an ASCII one file.txt, type:

```
AmyStpEncoder file.ext file.txt
```

- To encode a binary file file1.ext to an ASCII one file1.txt with a line length of 65 characters, type:

```
AmyStpEncoder file1.ext file1.txt -d=65
```

- To encode a binary file file2.ext to an ASCII one file2.txt with a line length of 65 characters and with a suggested output file length of 5000 bytes (original file2.ext size=4000bytes), type:

```
AmyStpEncoder file2.ext file2.txt -d=65 -l=5000
```

- To decode an ASCII STP file file.txt, type:

```
AmyStpDecoder file.txt
```

1.10 AmySTP Manual: Contacts

Feel free to contact me for any ideas, questions, bug reports or just about anything else. My address is:

Manolis S Pappas
Thermopilon 24
14231 Nea Ionia
Athens
GREECE

I can also be reached via electronic networks:

E-Mail: mpappas@acropolis.net
mpappas@ba.aegean.gr

AmigaNET: 39:250/3.19
FidoNET: 2:410/128.19

See you soon.
:-)

1.11 AmySTP Manual: Credits :-)

AmySTP utilities were programmed by Manolis S Pappas in 1994-97. Compiled using the excellent SAS/C++ v6.57 system.

The original PC version (with no compression efficiency option) was programmed by Costas Lialliambis using Borland C++.

Hello goes out to:

The members of the Xperts Group:

Argiris D Maistralis
Menelaos P Mikedis

Andreas C Apessos
Costas E Tabouris
Dimitris Andiopoulos

The people behind the Amiga community in Greece.
Stefanos Papamichael
Konstantinos Margaritis
Nick Eleftherianos
Manos Konstantiniadis
Frank Livadaros
... and everyone else I forgot.

The "Club of Amiga Friends" club.

Thank you for trying AmySTP.

Thanks to the Amiga // for being the BEST personal computer
\\// human ever made!
