

Shrinker 2.1 online reference

Welcome to the demonstration version of Shrinker 2.1, the latest utility from Blink, Inc. The demonstration version is fully functional, the only limitation is that each compressed program will display a message at startup indicating that it was created with the demonstration version of Shrinker.

Shrinker will take ANY 16 bit Windows .EXE, .DLL, .DRV or .OCX file or ANY DOS .EXE or .DLL file and transparently compress it. Compression ratios will vary from file to file, but many files will compress by up to 60%.

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About Blink, Inc.

With permanent offices in both the US and Europe, Blinkinc is an innovative software company committed to providing high quality programming tools which enable PC software developers to create more powerful and efficient software programs in less time. The strengths of the company lie in the technical excellence of its software, the firm commitment to product development and the prompt and comprehensive technical support offered to registered users.

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Introduction

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Introduction

Introduction to Shrinker

Shrinker will take ANY 16 bit Windows .EXE, .DLL, .DRV or .OCX file or ANY DOS .EXE or .DLL file and transparently compress it. The program remains in this compressed form until it is executed, at which time it is transparently expanded into memory and executed in an uncompressed form.

Compression ratios will vary from file to file, but many files will compress by up to 60%.

Benefits of compression include reduced distribution and storage costs, reduced network traffic and protection against decompilers and disassemblers.

Distribution costs are significantly reduced, both for physical distribution on diskettes and for electronic distribution via communication networks such as the Internet.

Local and Wide Area Network traffic is reduced because the size of actual data transmitted is reduced, and the workstation decompresses the program locally.

Once a file is compressed there is currently no way to restore the original file, so please keep the original file while testing or if it may be needed at a future time.

Introduction

Introduction to data compression

Data compression consists of finding repeating patterns within the data and storing an abbreviated form of the pattern instead of the original, thus reducing the size of the data. When the data is decompressed for use, the patterns are recreated from the table of patterns and the abbreviated form of the pattern.

Compression tools can typically be divided into 2 categories, file compression and disk compression.

File compression tools usually take the form of user initiated archiving or backup tools, and are used to create compressed versions of selected files for backup storage. The archived files must always be manually unarchived or decompressed before they can be used.

Disk compression tools usually operate at the operating system level, and transparently compress all data stored on the disk regardless of its type or usage.

Shrinker works at the individual file level, but has the advantage of transparent decompression at run time, providing the benefits of selective compression and transparency.

Introduction

Registration and technical support

Blinkinc offers free technical support in the U.S. and Canada as described below to registered customers. Technical support details for other countries are provided later in this section.

Important: Please complete and mail the enclosed registration card. Technical support and product upgrades are only made available to registered users.

Who can call?

We support one user per registered product - the individual named on the product registration card. While we offer a high quality technical support service to registered users, it is not our policy to support multiple users of a single registered product.

Customers wishing to change the individual to whom technical support is given during the free support period may do so in writing to the address given on the next page.

Electronic mail

Blinkinc in the U.S. provides technical support to registered users via an electronic bulletin board service. The BBS contains the latest technical support notes, messages from other users of our products, and files of general interest to developers. Specific queries, problems or suggestions can also be directed to the Sysops, either publicly or privately. Suggestions for improvements are always welcome.

The BBS telephone number is (804) 747-7333 and supported baud rates are 2400 up to and including 14400, with line settings N, 8, 1. The BBS is on-line 24 hours daily. Messages are usually answered within 48 hours.

Automated fax system

Blinkinc in the U.S. also provides a fax retrieval system from which you can request numerous technical support bulletins, and product and upgrade information. To request a list of available faxes and for further information dial (804)747-5333 from your fax machine.

Telephone and facsimile support for U.S. and Canadian customers

Please make a concerted effort to find the answer in this manual or on our technical support BBS before you call. However, if you still are having difficulties, you may phone us in the U.S. at (804) 747-3600 between the hours of 0930 and 1730 Eastern Standard Time. Our U.S. fax number is (804) 747-4200.

When you call for support we will require the following information to resolve your problem as quickly as possible:

- Your Shrinker serial number and version number.
- A brief description of the problem, including the Shrinker error message.
- The filename of the file that was compressed, and, if known, the name and version number of the language compiler used to create it.

Telephone support will be provided free of charge to registered users for a period of 90 days after registration for any questions directly relating to Shrinker. After this period you may join the Blinkinc Developers' Club for a nominal fee which entitles you to free fax support, three technical newsletters per year and interim updates mailed as they become available. Please call for further details.

U.S. mail

Our U.S. address is:

Blinkinc

8001 West Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23294
U.S.A.

European customers

If your Shrinker serial number is prefixed with "SE" you are entitled to 90 days free technical support through our European distributors. Blinkinc Ltd. in the U.K. provides 90 days free technical support to registered users who obtain Shrinker directly from them. Please contact:

Blinkinc Ltd.
P.O. Box 9, Penarth
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If your Shrinker serial number begins with "SA" you have obtained an American version of the software. You will not be entitled to free technical support in Europe and will also be required to pay any additional shipping & handling charges and customs duties on upgrades shipped directly from the U.S. You may contact Blinkinc Ltd. to obtain an upgrade to a European version of the software to alleviate these problems.

We have done our utmost to reduce the price discrepancy between the cost of our software license in the U.S. and Europe, but cannot prevent the "grey importing" of U.S. software. We urge you to take the matter up with the distributor concerned if this causes you any inconvenience.

Overseas

All our overseas distributors have agreed to provide Shrinker registered users with 90 days free technical support. If you are not located in the USA & Canada or Europe, please contact your local distributor responsible for providing you with technical support.

Introduction

License agreement

The Shrinker license agreement is printed on the front of the Shrinker product envelope. Please refer to the envelope for details of the license agreement.

Installation

Before installing Shrinker, please take a few minutes to fill out and return the enclosed registration card. It is essential that you do this in order to receive your 90 days of free technical support, and to be eligible for further support and future upgrades to the product.

To install Shrinker, insert the diskette in the floppy drive and from either Windows or DOS run:

X:\INSTALL

where X: is the drive letter containing the distribution diskette. The installation program will prompt you for the installation drive and directory, and will install the software in the specified directory.

Using Shrinker

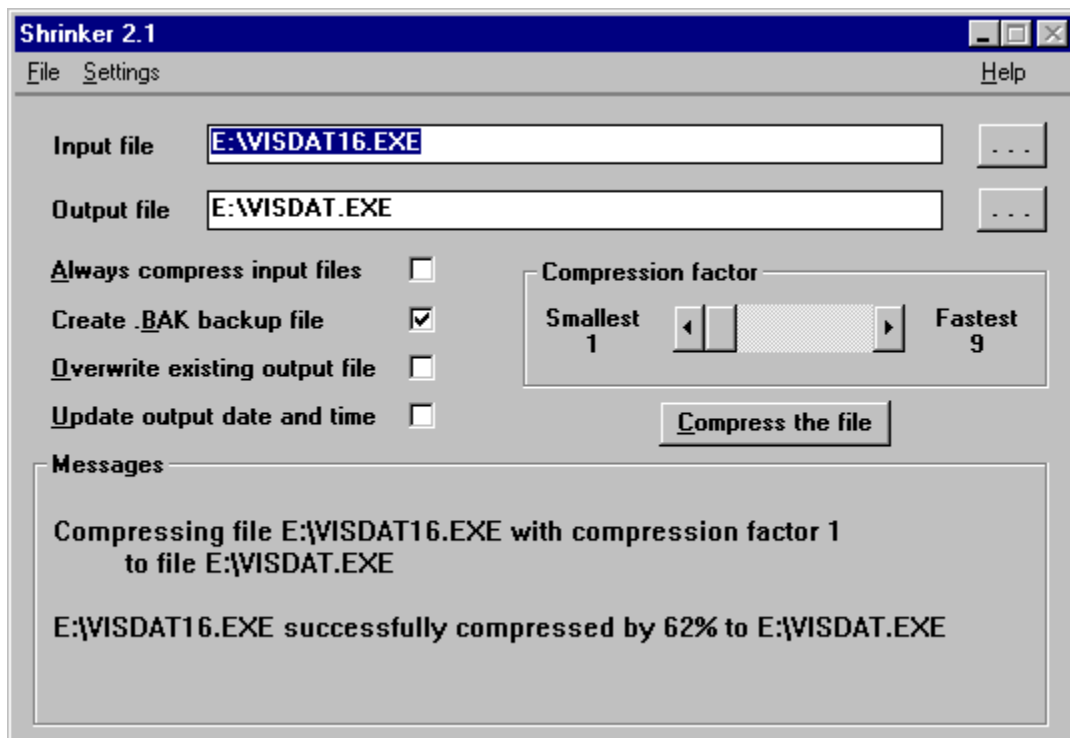
Shrinker automatically senses the environment in which it is being run, and can run as both a Windows and a DOS program.

The input file must always be specified, but if no output file is specified then the compressed file will be created with the input file name and the original input file will be saved with an extension of .BAK.

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Using Shrinker

Using Shrinker under Windows



To use Shrinker under Windows, simply set up a shortcut or icon to SHRINKER.EXE and select the icon. Shrinker will then display the screen shown on the previous page, providing various options to control the compression process.

Note that the command line options documented in the section entitled 'Command Line options' later in this chapter are applicable when running Shrinker under Windows as well as under DOS, and the check boxes and controls in the Windows user interface automatically reflect these options.

The buttons to the right of the 'Input file' and 'Output file' names allow a file to be located and selected from a standard File Open dialog box.

The 'Always compress input files' checkbox is used to force Shrinker to always create the output file, even if there is no significant decrease in the file size. This option can be used to obtain the benefit of protection against decompilers even when the savings due to compression are not significant.

This option should be used with care with files which are already compressed with a compression utility, since there is a risk they may not run after being compressed a second time.

The 'Create .BAK backup file' checkbox is used to force Shrinker to save the original input file with a file extension of '.BAK' if no output file name was given, since the original file will be overwritten with its compressed form. This checkbox is enabled by default.

The 'Overwrite existing output files' checkbox is used to force Shrinker to overwrite any output files without prompting, even if they already exist. This option should be used with care if a backup of the input file has not been made.

The 'Update output date and time' checkbox is used to force Shrinker to stamp the output file with the current date and time, rather than the default, which is to retain the same date and time as the input file.

The 'Compression factor' scrollbar is used to change the compression factor from its default value of 5. The smaller the compression factor, the better the compression, and so the smaller the resulting output file. Achieving the best compression requires significantly longer to process the input file, so a larger compression factor may be used during testing to save time.

Using Shrinker

Using Shrinker under DOS

To use Shrinker from DOS, simply type

```
SHRINKER InputFile [OutputFile]  
          [options]
```

at the DOS prompt. To display a summary of the command line options run Shrinker with no parameters.

Using Shrinker

Command line options

Shrinker command line options (- or /, not case sensitive) are applicable when running Shrinker under both Windows and DOS. The options are as follows:

- CA Compression Always
Always compress the input files
- CFn Compression Factor
1 = smallest through
9 = fastest
- CS Compression Smallest
Equivalent to -CF1
- MV Message Verbose
Display progress messages
- OO Output Overwrite
Always overwrite output files
- OU Output Update
Update output file date and time to today

The -CA setting is used to force Shrinker to always create the output file, even if there is no significant decrease in the file size. This option can be used to obtain the benefit of protection against decompilers even when the savings due to compression are not significant.

This option should be used with care with files which are already compressed with a compression utility, since there is a risk they may not run after being compressed a second time.

The -CFn setting is used to change the compression factor from its default value of 5. The smaller the compression factor, the better the compression, and so the smaller the resulting output file. Achieving the best compression requires significantly longer to process the input file, so a larger compression factor may be used during testing to save time.

The -CS setting is used to force the smallest compression factor, so is exactly equivalent to setting -CF1.

The -MV setting is used to force Shrinker to display a number of information and progress messages while the input file is being compressed.

The -OO setting is used to force Shrinker to overwrite any output files without prompting, even if they already exist. This option should be used with care if a backup of the input file has not been made.

The -OU setting is used to force Shrinker to stamp the output file with the current date and time, rather than the default, which is to retain the same date and time as the input file.

Run time requirements of compressed programs

Shrinker compresses files for distribution and storage, but since the program is decompressed into memory at run time, Shrinker does not reduce the run time memory requirements of the program.

For compressed programs there may be a slight increase in load time while the program is decompressed. However, this is usually offset by the reduced time taken to read the smaller compressed file, particularly over a network. There will be no impact on the execution speed of the program once it has been loaded.

Compressed DOS programs have no overhead or extra memory requirements at run time.

Compressed Windows programs require from 60 to 100 Kb of extra memory from Windows at run time. This memory is used to decompress parts of the program which are only loaded and decompressed by Windows on demand.

Choosing files to compress

Shrinker will take ANY 16 bit Windows .EXE, .DLL, .DRV or .OCX file or ANY DOS .EXE or .DLL file and transparently compress it.

Typically, the larger the file the better the compression achieved, and for best compression be sure to set the 'Smallest output file' option in Shrinker for Windows or the -CS command line option.

Certain Windows system files such as KRNL286.EXE, KRNL386.EXE, USER.DLL etc. should not be compressed, nor should particularly small files since the benefit is minimal.

Other files which should not be compressed are as follows:

CAVOCOMP.DLL

(CA Visual Objects)

