

FlopImager 2.0

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	What is FlopImager?	1
1.2	Licensing	1
1.3	Disclaimer	1
1.4	Package and Delivery	2
1.5	System Requirements	2
2	Unpacking	3
2.1	Program Executables	3
2.2	File Type Registration	3
3	The Windows Version of FlopImager	4
3.1	Creating an Image of your Floppy Disk	4
3.2	Writing an existing Image to your Floppy Disk	5
4	The Console Version of FlopImager	6
5	The Author	7
5.1	Contacting me for Feedback	7
5.2	Whishlist for FlopImager	7
5.3	Changes to pervious Versions	8

List of Figures

3.1	Main screen of the Windows version of 2.0	4
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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 What is FlopImager?

FlopImager is designed to create image files of your floppy disks. Once created you can write them back to another disk. So FlopImager can be used to simply copy one disk to another, but the main reason I wrote this application is, that the data saved to a floppy disk is not that save as if you would write it to compact- or a harddisk, or send them as emails to friends.

It is usually no problem to copy all the files stored on a floppy disk to another media. But some floppy disks contain extra information is not stored in files (eg. the bootsector your Win2k setup disks or your old MS-DOS boot disks). How would you copy this information? Or what if your floppy disk contains data without filesystem information (disks written by other operating systems)?

This is where FlopImager becomes useful. This very easy-to-use application reads the whole content of your disk cylinder by cylinder and saves it into an image file on a specified path. If the original disk get lost or damaged, it can any time be reproduced with help of the disk image.

FlopImager comes in two flavours: One as a Windows program for convenient usage via mouse, and once as a console application allowing FlopImager to be used in scripts and other programs.

1.2 Licensing

FlopImager is shareware. If you obtain a version of FlopImager, you can take your time trying it out. If you decide to use FlopImager for your purposes, you are kindly asked to purchase a personal license. This will remove the inconvenient reminders in the unlicensed version, and it will activate additional features¹.

1.3 Disclaimer

FlopImager comes with no warrenty and the author does not take responsibility for any loss of data or other damage to the user caused by FlopImager.

¹And on top of all it will give me some support for improving the program.

1.4 Package and Delivery

The FlopImager program is delivered as a ZIP archive containing the following files:

- FlopImgr.exe: FlopImager executable as a Windows application
- FlopImgC.exe: FlopImager executable as a console application
- manual.pdf: This document

1.5 System Requirements

FlopImager was designed and tested for running under Windows NT/2k and XP. It does not yet support Windows 9x/ME, but I'm working on it. Further this program assumes that you have an existing floppy drive called 'a:' or another called 'b:'. Only these two drives can be used for reading/writing disk images.

Chapter 2

Unpacking

2.1 Program Executables

The FlopImager program does not need to be installed and as well it does not need any extra dll-files that are not delivered with your operating system. Just copy the whole folder containing the files shipped with FlopImager to your harddisk and create a link to the executable 'FlopImgr.exe' on your desktop or in your start menu. FlopImager will start by doubleclicking on the new icon.

2.2 File Type Registration

The FlopImager program uses its own file types for disk images (*.dsk). To tell your computer that these files belong to the FlopImager program (recommended) just start the Windows version of FlopImager. Open the pulldown menu by clicking on the small icon at the upper left corner of the FlopImager window and select the 'Reg Filetypes' item. This will add some entries to the system registry. To remove them just select the item 'UnReg Filetypes'.

Chapter 3

The Windows Version of FlopImager

3.1 Creating an Image of your Floppy Disk

The disk images will only be created from the floppy disk in drive 'a:' or 'b:'. The following enumeration will show you the steps for creating a disk image and write it to your harddisk:

1. start the FlopImager program
2. switch to the active drive by clicking on the button 'Switch'
3. click on the button 'Read A:' or 'Read B:'
4. a new dialog box shows up: select the place and the name of the image file to be created
5. watch the progress bar growing



Figure 3.1: Main screen of the Windows version of 2.0

3.2 Writing an existing Image to your Floppy Disk

An existing disk image can only be written back to a floppy disk in drive 'a:' or 'b:'. The following enumeration will show you the steps for writing back a disk image from an image file on your hddisk:

1. start the FlopImager program
2. switch to the active drive by clicking on the button 'Switch'
3. click on the button 'Write A:' or 'Write B:'
4. a new dialog box shows up: select an existing image file to be written back to the disk
5. watch the progress bar growing while FlopImager is lowlevelformatting your disk
6. enjoy the progress bar shrinking while the image file is written to disk

Alternatively you can also use the builtin drag'n'drop feature, which makes the handling much easier. Look at the following enumeration for learning more about:

1. start the FlopImager program
2. switch to the active drive by clicking on the button 'Switch'
3. click with the left mousebutton on the icon of your disk image file in the explorer window and drag it to the FlopImager window
4. drop it by releasing the mousebutton

But the easiest way of all is clicking with the right mousbutton on the icon of your disk image file in the explorer window (works only if the file types are registred). Choose the items 'write to a:' or 'write to b:' in the appearing menu. The FlopImager program will be opened and the image file will directly be written to the specified floppy disk.

Chapter 4

The Console Version of FlopImager

The console version of FlopImager covers the same functionality as the Windows version of FlopImager. The only difference is that the console version does not have a graphical user interface, so that all commands must be provided as command line arguments.

Open a MS-DOS console and run the console version of FlopImager without any command line arguments. A help message will be displayed providing information on what command line arguments to use.

Chapter 5

The Author

5.1 Contacting me for Feedback

I am always happy about feedback and ideas for FlopImager. Please do not hesitate to send me an email to 'flopimager@oliverlanz.ch' if you have any comments, questions or suggestions for improvements. For more information about me please visit my website at '<http://www.oliverlanz.ch>'.

5.2 Whishlist for FlopImager

With version 2.0 of FlopImager the wishlist has been reduced quite a bit. But there are still some things I would like to add to this program:

1. ability to create self-executable image files
2. support for Win9x/ME
3. password protection of image files

Please do not hesitate to contact me, if you'd like to have another feature built into FlopImager.

5.3 Changes to pervious Versions

Version:	Date:	Change:
2.0	20.07.03	Majorly rewritten, new file format, data compression, command line options, new licensing module
1.5	20.02.02	common filename dialogs are now application modal, added Win2k support, lowlevel format dismissed
1.4	03.03.99	drag'n'drop capability and file type registration added, user interface redesigned
1.3	28.01.99	bug in the file selection dialog removed, user interface redesigned
1.2	09.01.99	manual added to the package
1.1	28.12.98	bug in memory allocation fixed
1.0	25.12.98	first Release for tests