FileSearchEX 1.1 Series

Instruction Manual

document version: 1.1.0.9
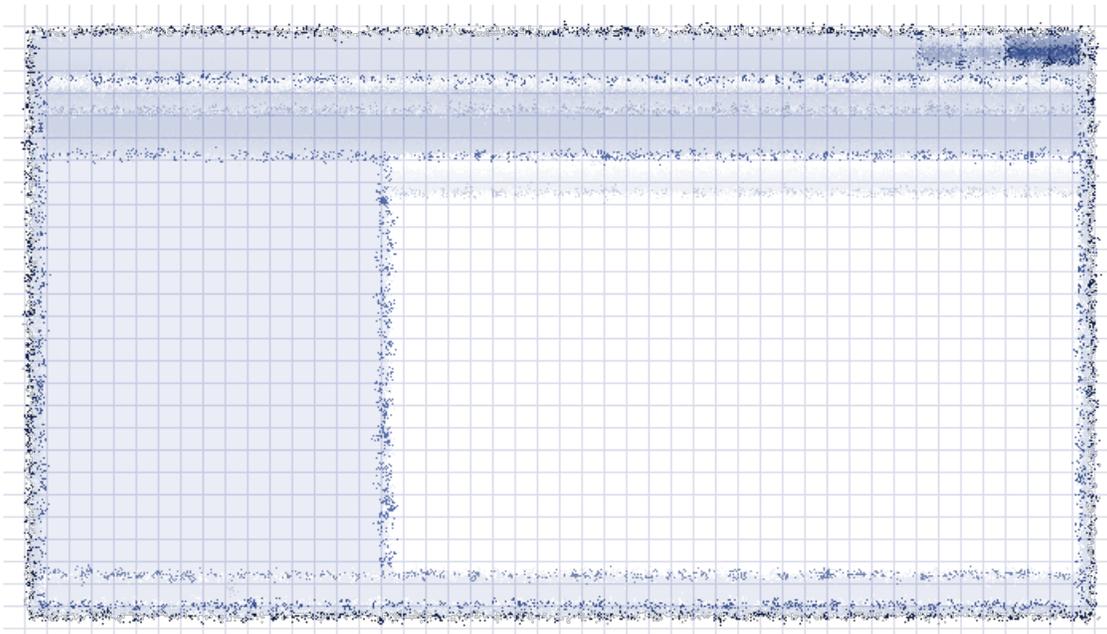
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Installing FileSearchEX

FileSearchEX was designed to be easy to use and install in large corporate settings. Other search tools are assumed to be in use and the logged on user is expected to only have limited permissions. The provided installer for FileSearchEX is merely a convenience for single use scenarios or when extensive customization is not desired. Below, both situations are described. Pick the one that best describes your needs.

Using the provided installer

Run *FileSearchEX-Install.exe* by double clicking on it with a mouse. After agreeing to the EULA, the options are fairly generic. You can set a *right-click context menu* which controls whether or not FileSearchEX appears when you *right-click* on a folder or directory. You also have the choice of creating *short cut folders* and finally a choice of where to install *FileSearchEX.exe* itself. Although FileSearchEX does not need administrator rights, the installer does as required by Microsoft Windows®.

Using the advanced manual install method

This method is for those who wish to deploy FileSearchEX to many computers in an organization or who wish to have more control in how FileSearchEX should appear on workstations. Run *FileSearchEX-Install.exe* and after agreeing to the EULA, select the *Advanced Manual Install* method. This will cause the installer to extract additional files to the directory you choose.

When complete, you will be working with the following:

AdvancedManualInstall.reg	–	settings that control various options for FileSearchEX
FileSearchEX.exe	–	the program executable
Manual.pdf	–	the document you are currently reading
lang	–	folder with language files
plugins	–	folder with plugin files

Read the *AdvancedManualInstall.reg* file carefully. It is commented and will explain how to control the various options. When you are ready to deploy FileSearchEX, you only need to create a batch file or script. In your script, you will copy the above files to your chosen directory and then import the registry file.

Using the *Search For* edit box

The *Search for files or folders* edit box accepts many different keywords and symbol types. Of course, you need not know these advanced syntax's and may use the product naturally. If you're simply looking for a file or folder then type part of the name, as much as you can remember, and let FileSearchEX take care of the rest. In this way, FileSearchEX will find items with the string you specified.

DOS and Boolean syntax

By default the *Search for files or folders* edit box accepts DOS and Boolean syntax search terms. Read the DOS and Boolean Syntax section on **Page 6** for more information.

Regular Expression syntax

The *Search for files or folders* edit box also accepts Perl 5.12 regular expression syntax if *Use Regex syntax* is checked. This is an advanced syntax for use by experts only. Support for this feature is available for a fee.

Extensions (file type) handling

Since the *Search for* edit box allows for DOS syntax you may specify file types using the *asterisk dot* (***.txt**) symbols. Note that if performing a *Type* search (the check box appearing on the main form) that these two settings **will** cancel each other out. Therefore, do **not** specify types in the *Search for* edit box while simultaneously performing a **Type** search. To understand these features in greater depth please read the *Working with file extensions* section.

Using the *Containing Text* edit box

FileSearchEX offers the ability to look *inside* files for strings you specify. This feature is deceptively simple. In reality, FileSearchEX is opening each and every file type you specify, converting special types into readable data, searching through the contents, and then moving on to the next file. This process is only as fast as your computer's hard drive and RAM subsystem will allow. Doing this over a UNC path could make the process slower depending on the network conditions.

DOS and Boolean syntax

By default the *Containing text* edit box accepts DOS and Boolean syntax search terms. Read the *DOS and Boolean Syntax* section on **Page 6** for more information.

Regular Expression syntax

The *Containing text* edit box also accepts Perl 5.12 regular expression syntax if *Use Regex syntax* is checked. This is an advanced syntax for use by experts only. Note that **^** and **$** apply to the entire file and **not** individual lines within the file.

File format and extension handling

To choose file types that FileSearchEX should open and look inside, make sure the file extension is specified on the *Tools / Options / General / File Options* form. Check *Search inside of all files* if desired. For more information about file extensions please read the Working with file extensions section.

Some file types do not have their data converted by FileSearchEX. If your file type is not currently searchable, you may try installing the *Microsoft Filter Pack 2.0* components.

Note that password protected files cannot be searched. Also file sizes greater than the free RAM space will not be opened for searching.

Unicode text handling

FileSearchEX will attempt to automatically determine the encoding of plain text files. It is very helpful if a BOM mark is present, however. To disable this feature set the *Option_AutoCharacterEncodin*g registry key.

DOS and Boolean Syntax

By default FileSearchEX treats search strings as having *DOS or Boolean* syntax. The following special symbols control the behavior of the search.

Search symbols

" "   Quotation means *exactly*. Anything between the two *double* quotes is taken literally except for case sensitivity. Use them when you want to search for special symbols (as listed below) or spaces.

?   Question mark means *something must appear here*. If you type **file?** then you would expect **file2** and **file3** to show up in the results.

*   Asterisk means *everything*. Something and even *nothing* at all may appear to the left or right of this character. A search for ***** will return everything. A search for ***.txt** will only return files of that type.

| Pipe means *OR*. Thus a search for ***.txt | *.doc | *File*** would return all text files, all doc files and anything with **File** in its name. You may also type the word **OR** (uppercase only) in place of the pipe symbol.

+   Plus means *AND*. Thus a search for **one + two** would return only items with a *one* **and** a *two* (in any order) in its name. You may also type the word **AND** (uppercase only) in place of the plus symbol. Note that an implicit **AND** is always used. If you use a space between terms (**one two**) it is treated as if it was written as **one + two**.

-   Minus means *NOT*. Thus a search for **one -two** would return only items with a **one** in the name. You may also type the word **NOT** (uppercase only) in place of the minus symbol.

Examples

- Identical search queries:
  apple AND pear NOT plum
  apple + pear -plum
  apple pear -plum
- Looking for multiple file types: *.txt | *. doc
- Quote symbols if specifically looking for them: "my search for ? + *"
- Anything beginning with the letters sam: sam*
- Anything ending in sam: *sam
- Find the following two phrases in any order in a single document: "a good buy" + "for all staff"

Working with file extensions

Files usually have an extension in their name to denote the **type** of content contained within. They are usually three or more letters; the **.txt** and **.doc** are common extensions for example. You may not be accustomed to working with these suffixes if your operating system has hidden their view from you.

To make searching as fast as possible, FileSearchEX allows you to skip looking for (and inside) certain file **types**. This behavior is controlled in two major areas.

Containing text extension awareness

From the file menu, navigate to the *Tools / Options / General / File Options* entry. Here you may add or remove extensions that will used when performing a *Containing text* search when the *Type* option (on the main form) is unchecked. To understand the effects of this; if you search for **"hello"** in the *Containing text* edit box then **.doc** files will **only** be searched if this extension is present in the list. For this reason, add any extensions you work with frequently. Remove extensions you have no intention of searching *inside*.

Search for and *Containing text* extension awareness

Another way to search for and inside files is via the *Type* check box visible on the main form. When this box is checked it supersedes the *File Options* form settings. Any extension that is visible (toggle the combo box to move between types) will be searched for as well as inside (if performing a *Containing text* search). Conversely, no files will be searched if the extension is not listed. To ease working with different types, you can create custom lists by editing the values that appear. Simply delimit each entry with the pipe (**|**) character.

Notes

Understand that the *Search for* edit box allows for entering symbols, names, as well as DOS syntax *type* specifiers (***.txt**). The *Type* check box is a way to simplify working with a group of file extensions. Therefore, when performing a *Type* search do **not** also specify types in the *Search for* edit box or they will cancel each other out.

Example scenarios

Setting: *Type* is unchecked, *Search for* specifies *.txt, *Containing text* is empty.
Result: All *.txt* files show up in search results.
Suggestion: none since this is expected behavior.

Setting: *Type* is unchecked, *Search for* is *.txt, *Containing text* is "hello".
Result: Nothing shows up because *File Options* did **not** list a **.txt** extension!
Suggestion: Add the .txt extension.

Setting: **Type** is **checked** and set to *Picture*, *Search for* specifies *.txt, *Containing text* is empty.
Result: Nothing appears because the *Type* setting chosen does not have an *.txt entry!
Suggestion: When performing **Type** searches, use the *Search for* box to specify names, **not** *Types*.

Using the *Look In* edit box

The *Look in* box allows you to speed up searches or perhaps reduce results by restricting what directories FileSearchEX should sift through. This edit box also allows for special keywords that will be automatically expanded to their actual values when the search begins.

Default search

Enter the path to the folder you wish to restrict your search to. Optionally, you may click the drop down arrow and select *Browse* for an intuitive display of the computer's folder hierarchy.

Specific search

| Pipe, means *OR*. Thus a search for **C:\ | \\Server\Share** would return results from **both** locations.

Auto suggest

To initiate the *Auto Suggest* feature, type the first three characters of a drive or UNC path. If the path is valid, a list of found paths will appear. After selecting a path, FileSearchEX will search from that location. Note that this feature is disable when using the *pipe* character.

Keyword search

The *Look in* box works with special keyword terms, system environmental strings, and UNC server paths. Currently, the supported keyword terms are **Desktop**, **My Documents**, **My Profile**, **My Computer**, and **Local Fixed Drives**. For UNC paths, you may type the complete path or if only specifying a server (example: **\\ Server)** it will auto expand all UNC share names. Note that the expanded names are not shown in the edit box.

Indexing and System Directories

FileSearchEX does **not** maintain index data or caching. A fast disk system has the most impact on performance.

However, editing the *Sys_SystemFolders* registry key can allow for some fine tuning by removing directories you never want searched. By default this key is populated with well known *System* folders. If the *Search system folders* option is unchecked, the directories listed here are excluded from the search process. To customize this feature, delimit each entry with the pipe (**|**) character.

Searching archive file types

Archive file types (ZIP, CAB, etc.) and even Microsoft Outlook PST files appear as a single file in a directory. However, they generally contain folders, files, and even sub archive files within their compressed binary representations. FileSearchEX allows you to search these formats via the *Search for* and *Containing text* edit boxes.

Searching Archive files

Archive file types represent themselves as folder hierarchies and files, therefore, the *Search for* and *Containing text* edit boxes behave similarly* as if searching a regular folder. Ensure the *Search inside archives* option is **checked**. This will cause the *Search for* edit box to only search file names as they are found within an archive file. File contents in the archive are **not** opened resulting in quick lookup. If a query string is entered into the *Containing text* edit box, then file contents stored within the archive are searched. Naturally, you can use both *Search for* and *Containing text* to limit what to look for.

Searching Outlook PST files

Outlook PST files contain email properties like *From*, *To*, *Subject* and *Body* data. In addition, they can also have file attachments sent along with the message. File attachments are often archive file types to make the email small for transport. To make searching this special file format easier, the *Search for* edit box applies to more than just all supported email fields. It will also search for file *attachment names* and file *attachment contents*. If an archive file type is encountered it will also be searched even if the *Search inside archives* option is **not** checked. As expected, the *Containing text* query only applies to file attachment *contents*. Do ensure that the PST file extension appears under *Tools / Options / File Options* for this feature to be active.

* As of version 1105, folder names within archives are not yet searchable.

Keyboard shortcuts

F1	Show the help file.
F2	Rename selected item.
F3	Show/Hide the Search pane.
F4	Drop down focused combo box.
F5	Refresh view.
F6	Toggle focus between search results and Search pane.
F10	Puts focus on the menu bar.
F11	Maximizes the application.

ALT	Puts focus on the menu bar.
ALT+ENTER	Shows a property sheet for the currently selected items.

CTRL+A	Select all items.
CTRL+C	Copy all items.
CTRL+D	Delete selected items.
CTRL+E	Show/Hide the Search pane.
CTRL+F	Show/Hide the Search pane.
CTRL+W	Closes the application.
CTRL+R	Toggle Regex syntax support.
CTRL+X	Cut selected items.
CTRL+ENTER	Open containing folder.

Custom language translation

FileSearchEX can be translated into any language very easily. By default, it will attempt to automatically load a language file present in the *Lang* directory where **FileSearchEX.exe** is located. The English language is the default choice if a matching language file is not present.

Making a custom language translation

Run FileSearchEX and go to the *Tools / Options / Language* tab. Take note of the values listed under *System language settings*. These are values the operating system reported for your Locale and Language pack. If you want FileSearchEX to automatically load your language file, you'll need some of these values to match and be present in the language file.

Step 1:

Copy and rename the **en.txt** file located in the *Lang* directory. Rename it to be the *ISO 639 Tag* value as reported by FileSearchEX if you want it loaded automatically. Otherwise you may rename it to be anything you want.

Step 2:

Edit your language file and set the *L0000, L0001*, and *L0002* keys. If you do not know your *ISO 639 Tag* value then leave the *L0002* key blank.

Step 3:

Translate all remaining keys (*F0000, F0001*, etc.) as desired.

Step 4:

Run FileSearchEX and verify the translation works as expected. If it does not load your language file automatically, verify that *Choose a display language*: is set to *Automatic*. Otherwise, choose your language file manually.

Acknowledgments

FileSearchEX has been created with the help of a number of open source libraries. Creating software is hard work and here they are thanked for their time and attention to detail. Source code and contact information is available on their respective websites. Additional details are presented in the *Acknowledgments.txt* file. A short summary is shown below.

PCRE	pcre.org
zlib	zlib.net
Xpdf (PdfToText)	glyphandcog.com
wpd2text	libwpd.sourceforge.net
uchardet	github.com/BYVoid/uchardet
7zip	7-zip.org
bit7z	github.com/rikyoz/bit7z
Fairport	terrymah.github.io/Fairport

And the many folks at various online venues who share helpful tips and snippets.