FileSync User's Guide

Note: This document was written by **John Whatley** (jwhatley@mindspring.com). Please direct questions about FileSync to the author, David Piepgrass (qwertman@hotmail.com)

Introduction

This small, Y2K compliant program is used to synchronize files between folders so that modified files can be quickly backed up. This program is intended to provide copies of files that are unique to a computer, i.e. that you have invested your time to create and would be difficult if not impossible to create again. You must verify this program works as intended in your environment. No warranty is provided, express or implied, for your use of this program. Once performed, a synchronization cannot be undone. It is imperative that
- The system clock on all computers is correct to prevent the wrong files from being copied.
- Files are not corrupt when synchronizing, especially with removable media.

Properly used, FileSync can provide a means of protecting your data against
- operator mistakes (inadvertent destruction of data)
- application program malfunctions
- hard disk crashes
- physical destruction of the computer (such as fire)

For the most complete protection, copies should be kept on removable media that is stored separately from the computer location. FileSync supplements but does not replace the need for periodic full and incremental/differential system backups. For those who do not take the time or have the equipment to perform a full system backup, it can provide protection for the files that are most difficult to recover after a hard disk crash or destruction of the computer.

FileSync may require some knowledge of where an application places the data you create. For example, an application may have the option to specify where to place the files, such as in "My Documents". In the worst case, you may have to change some data and use Windows Explorer to find the files that the application changed by searching (Tools > Find > Files or folders...) for files modified in the last day.

Setting Up FileSync

After expanding FileSync.zip to a directory (such as C:\Program Files\FileSync), create a shortcut in the Start Programs Menu or on the desktop and launch FileSync. Tailor the following items for use on your computer:

1. Create the ***"Synchronization Sets"***

   A. The first time FileSync is used, the only name in the "Synchronization Sets" is "Untitled". "Untitled" can be renamed by clicking on "Untitled", entering a new name and clicking "Rename". The set name should be descriptive of the folder or application being backed up, such as MyDocs or Word. If FileSync will be run from a batch file, it is suggested for simplicity that the name not include spaces. Each set is independent of every other set and can be synchronized separately. The "Synchronization Sets" specifications are saved in the registry and the number of sets is unlimited. Specify the following options for each of the "Synchronization Sets":

(1) *"Auto-Create files"*
   (a) "Yes" to allow FileSync to automatically add new files to any directory.
   (b) "No" to prevent new files in one directory from being copied to another directory. Modified files will only be copied if they already exist in both locations.
   (c) "Ask Me" to be prompted to copy each file which doesn't exist in another directory.

(2) *"Recursive"* to synchronize all subdirectories of the directory. When the "Recursive" box is checked, the entire directory structure of the two folders is synchronized. Subfolders must contain one or more files to be synchronized.

(3) *"Name filters..."* - wildcard file specifications to be included in the synchronization (*.* for all files). File name matching is not case-sensitive. For example, to only synchronize Word Documents, enter *.DOC (or *.doc). Use a ';' to separate multiple filespecs with no space in between. For example, to only synchronize Word and WordPerfect documents, type *.DOC;*.WPD.

* at the beginning of the filename

Example	Matches	Doesn't Match
*hello	hello and abcdhello	olleh or helloabcd

* at the end of the filename

Example	Matches	Doesn't Match
hello*	hello and helloabcd	hidude or abcdhello

* in the middle of the filename

Example	Matches	Doesn't Match
he*en	heaven and heen	crappyheavem or hen

* at the beginning and the end

Example	Matches	Doesn't Match
quit	quite, noquitting, and "I Quit, I Really Quit!" Qui	

Note: Multiple *s are invalid in any other form (won't match) - a*b*c is invalid

? (single character wild card)

Example	Matches	Doesn't Match
????* filename must be at least four characters long	1234	123
Mp?	mp2, mp3, and mpx	mp22, mp, or mymp3

Miscellaneous

Example	Matches	Doesn't Match
hello (No Dot)	any extension	hel
hello.	hello with no extension	hello.a
.txt	any filename	1.tx

(4) *"Exclusion filters"* - wildcard file specifications (same as examples above) to be excluded from the synchronization. Use a ';' to separate multiple filespecs with no space in between.

(5) *"Date Warning"* - prompt before transferring a file with a date in the future.

B. Enter two or more folders under **_"Directories to synchronize"._**   Click the "Add" button after entering each folder name.   Instead of typing in the full directory path or using the "Browse" button, the mouse can be used to drag a folder icon from an Explorer window into the list.   More than two folders can be synchronized.   UNC Paths are supported but be sure to use backward slashes rather than forward slashes.

Specify the following option for each folder in "Directories to synchronize":
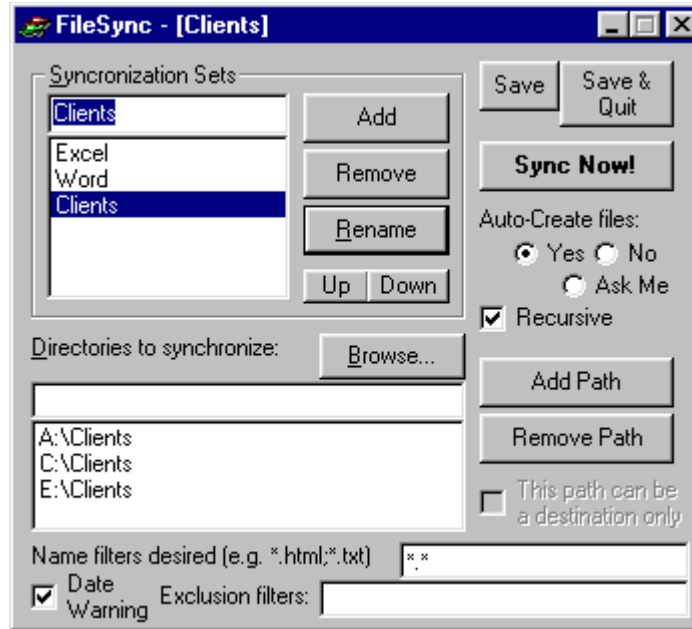
"Destination Only" - no files will be copied from the directory, even if they are newer.   This can be used to ensure that only one directory is the source of changes to files.   For example:

-   Data on a notebook and desktop computers is kept synchronized by using a Zip Disk.
-   The notebook makes extensive changes to its data and is synchronized to the Zip Disk.
-   The desktop is used while the notebook user is absent and some files are changed which are part of a synchronization set.
-   The notebook user returns and synchronizes the Zip Disk to the desktop.

The extensive data changes performed on the notebook will be lost on the Zip Disk unless the "Destination Only" box is checked.   If the Zip Disk is then synchronized to the notebook, the changed files will be overwritten by the later, slightly modified files.

2. After installing and setting up FileSync for the first time, select the "Save & Quit" option.   Windows must be shutdown and restarted to get the registry changes to take effect.

3. After specifying the above options for two or more folders (and restarting Windows if necessary), the synchronization can be performed by clicking on **_"Sync Now!"_**.   The synchronization process compares the file name, date, and time in each folder and copies the most up-to-date versions of each file to all folders within the limitations of the options specified.

In the following example, all folders in the Client Synchronization Set (A:\Clients, B:\Clients, and E:\Clients) will be mirrors of each other.

4. This program is written in Visual Basic and requires Windows to run.   Therefore, it can't be included in the AUTOEXEC.BAT since Windows isn't started at that time.   To synchronize directories automatically when Windows starts:
   - Create a shortcut to FileSync.exe in the Start Menu under Programs | Startup.
   - Right-click on the shortcut and choose "Properties".
   - In the "Target" field, append the name of the Sync Sets or /A for all sets.
     For example, if the Target field is "C:\Program Files\FileSync\FileSync.exe" then change it to:
     "C:\Program Files\FileSync\FileSync.exe" Word Excel "My Docs"

Note: You MUST include the quote marks around file specifications that are long file names or parameters that include a space!   Don't give your Sync Sets names with quotes in them!

FileSync also supports a number of switches, which are not case sensitive, and can appear before or after the list of sync sets.   Command-line switches can also be used to run FileSync from a DOS prompt or batch file.   The switch can be specified with a '/' or '-':

Switch	Description	Default
/S or -S	Show the main FileSync window	Run silent (nothing

displayed) except for errors or specified prompting (e.g. create a file)

/ST or -ST		Temporarily Show the

main FileSync window (closes when finished)

/Q or -Q	Quiet mode (no errors displayed). Use the /L or /LR switch.	
/L or -L filespec		Output is logged to the

filespec (path & filename - use quotes around long names) immediately following the switch (no space between)   No logging

/LR or -LR filespec		The file is reset and

output is logged to the filespec (path & filename - use quotes around long names) immediately following the switch (no space between)

/A or -A	All Synchronization Sets will be processed	Only specified sets are

processed

Example: C:\FileSync\FileSync.exe /q /lr"c:\Program Files\FileSync\FileSync.log" "My Docs"
- Will not display while synchronizing the "My Docs" set.
- Will reset the c:\Program Files\FileSync\FileSync.log to null and record the current synchronization results.