

Changes to Plx in System B.1

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Abstract:

Plx-A utility for manipulating floppies, has been modified substantially since the last release. This document describes Plx Version 1.1 which is being released with System B.1.

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Overview:

Many new features have been added to Plx since the last release. This document describes the new features and how to use them. Floppies are now very reliable and Plx seldom has trouble. It is still a good idea to have the BitPad pen well away (or unplugged) from the tablet while using Plx.

Current Plx commands are:

COMPRESS - Coalesce free space on the floppy.
 DATE - Set current date.
 DELETE - Delete a file from the floppy.
 DIRECTORY - Print the directory of the floppy. If there is a 2nd arg, the output goes to that disk file.
 FAST - Turn off confirmation for commands.
 GET - Retrieve a file from the floppy.
 HELP - Print this message.
 PUT - Save a file on the floppy.
 QUIT - Exit from PLX.
 RENAME - Change the name of a floppy file in place.
 SAFE - Require confirmation for commands.
 SIDES - Set number of sides.
 TYPE - Print a file from the floppy on the screen.
 VERIFY - Verify that disk and floppy files are identical.
 ZERO - Write a new directory on the floppy.
 @<file> - Execute command file <file>.

COMPRESS: This moves all the unused blocks to the end of the floppy. COMPRESS now has a switch which turns on or off verification. If verify is on (the default), COMPRESS checks every transfer to insure there are no errors. To use Compress in verify mode, type "Compress/v" or "Compress". For no verify, use "Compress/nov". Warning: this command takes a long time.

DATE: Allows the user to specify the current date or see the date PLX is using.

DELETE: Deletes a file on the floppy. Stars ("*") are allowed as the file name part or extension part or both.

DIRECTORY: The directory command now takes zero, one, or two arguments. If there are zero, then all the files on the floppy are listed. If there is one argument, then only the files on the floppy that match that name are listed (the name can contain stars). If there is a second argument, then the listing is sent to a disk file with that name and nothing is printed on the screen. For example, to send a full listing to disk file "floppy.list", type "DIRECTORY *. *floppy.list". The directory command now takes a

switch. "DIRECTORY/L" (Long), which is the default, prints the full listing, and "DIRECTORY/S" (Short) prints only the file names.

- FAST:** Turns off requests for confirmation for all subsequent commands. This is only a good idea in command files.
- GET:** Transfer a floppy file to the disk. If there is no room on the disk, this command will now tell you. If the file on the disk already exists, GET requests confirmation before overwriting it. Like COMPRESS, this also takes the VERIFY and NOVERIFY switches. Default is VERIFY. In the process of a GET, a little "hand" appears at the right margin of the screen and travels down as the transfer progresses. When it gets to the bottom, the transfer is complete (for small files, the marker will not get all the way to the bottom).
- HELP:** Types a list of commands.
- PUT:** Transfers a file from the disk to the floppy. If this is the first PUT of the session and the DATE command has not been executed, then PUT requires you to type the current date. PUT requires confirmation before overwriting an existing floppy file, and takes the VERIFY and NOVERIFY switches like GET. As with GET, a hand moves down the right margin to show progress.
- QUIT:** Exits PLX.
- RENAME:** Allows the user to change the name of a floppy file.
- SAFE:** (The default--Opposite of FAST). This changes the mode so that confirmation is required on subsequent commands. Note that even if a command file is in use, confirmation still comes from the keyboard.
- SIDES:** Tell PLX how many sides the floppy has. It is no longer necessary to execute this command to prevent PLX from aborting.
- TYPE:** Print a floppy file on the screen. The "hand" tells how much of file has been printed.
- VERIFY:** This command takes a disk file and a floppy file (in that order) and checks them to insure that all bytes are identical. It will print a message for every block that contains a difference.
- ZERO:** This creates a new directory on the floppy. Use this after formatting a floppy (which is done using the TestFloppy program) and whenever the current contents of a floppy are to be destroyed. This