

UnderstandIT

From **MAY DAY CONSULTING LIMITED** in association with **FACILITATORS UK**

A publication designed to inform and enable businesses to understand the implications, costs and advantages of using Information and Communications Technology. Distributed through Chambers of Commerce.

DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

The effective management of an organisation's documentation is a problem that all businesses face. This is particularly true in organisations like solicitors, technical authors or journalists for example, where perhaps more than one person might need to work on the same documents. The challenge is keeping track of multiple revisions and ensuring that the final document reflects all the amendments made to it by many individuals.

As in most areas of business, there are a number of excellent technical solutions to this problem. One such product that has gained an impressive reputation is DocMoto.

DocMoto's primary purpose is to store and manage electronic files such as word processor documents, spreadsheets, drawings and photographs. Using DocMoto to store files means that any revisions made to a file are automatically stored preventing the loss of work and making it simple to view previous versions. DocMoto is a multi-user system, so many people can work together on a single file without ever having to worry about overwriting each others work. DocMoto also provides a simple but powerful security system, so users can be restricted in the files they can access.

Example Usage Scenarios

1. A team working on a proposal

A team of people need to create a proposal in the form of a word processor document. In the past such documents have been stored on a shared network drive, where members of the team either take a copy and work on it on their own computers, or attempt to work directly on the master copy.

The team has hit two main problems, firstly whenever one team member works directly on the master copy none of the others can access it. Secondly, when team members have worked on their own local copy, then moved this back to update the master copy, they have overwritten each others work.

When using DocMoto, the master proposal document is added to the DocMoto server. Each member of the team is given security access to it. The DocMoto server now manages the team's progress. Using its checking-in and checking-out technology, DocMoto ensures that no two members on the team are working on the proposal at the same time. Using its revision creation technology DocMoto also ensures that as each new updated version (revision) is checked back, the previous version is automatically stored.

2. A graphics company managing artists work

A small graphics company produces electronic images. It employs 10 artists on a freelance basis, all of whom work from home with internet access. Currently when an artist creates an image for one of the company's clients, it is emailed to the company, who then save it in a folder on their network. Thereafter the company emails the image to the client and waits for approval. Often the client asks for modifications to be made to the image. The artist makes these, mails them to the company, who saves them in the same folder, often accidentally overwriting the previous version, then mails the updated images to the client. After several iterations, the client then decides they preferred the first version after all. But unfortunately both the artist and the client have overwritten the first version, so it has been lost.

As DocMoto can be used across the internet the company decides that it will give both its artists and clients secure access to the DocMoto server. The company creates a folder on the DocMoto server for each artist, and within that folder creates a sub-folder for each job the artist is working on. The company also creates a folder for each client.

Unlike conventional systems, when a DocMoto user does not have access to a folder they CANNOT see it. So the company feels confident that when their clients log in, they cannot see who the company's other clients are, and the artists cannot see which other artists are working for the company. Using DocMoto when an artist creates an image they check it in to the DocMoto server across the internet. After looking at it the company then places the image in the client's folder, and invites them to take a look at it via the internet.

Now when the client requests modifications, the artist makes the modified image, checks it into the DocMoto server, which automatically keeps the previous version, the company checks it, and places it into the clients folder, again, with the previous version automatically stored. The client and the artist, can now readily access all versions they have asked for or made, there is no danger of any previous version ever being lost.

If any of the above scenarios seem familiar to you, then checkout the DocMoto web site at <http://www.docmoto.com>.

As usual, neither May Day Consulting nor Facilitators warrants that any products it may discuss in these articles are suitable for any particular application or fit for purpose.

WINDOWS SYSTEM RESTORE

Have you ever installed some new software, or made some other configuration changes to your Windows operating system and found that your system refuses to function, or has other problems that you cannot resolve?

Windows XP has a facility that allows you to restore your system back to the condition it was in before you made the changes or installed that new piece of software.

The facility, when switched on, will monitor by default, your main system drive (the disk on which the Windows operating system is running from). However, you can also monitor any other hard disk drive that you have installed and the facility will automatically set “checkpoints” or “restore points” whenever you install new software or make configuration changes. In addition, you can manually set a checkpoint at any time.

To use the facility, it first has to be switched on. To do this, do the following:

Go to CONTROL PANEL, and select the SYSTEM icon, and then the SYSTEM RESTORE tab (see figure 1 below).

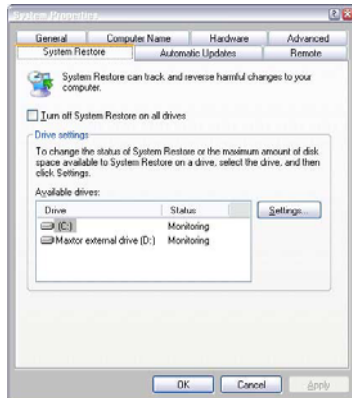


Figure 1

If the “Turn off System Restore on all drives” checkbox is checked, then uncheck it by clicking on the box. This will enable restore on each drive, and the status on each drive will change to “Monitoring”.

If Restore is switched on, you cannot stop monitoring of the system drive (usually drive C), but you can disable monitoring on any other drive, by clicking the drive letter under “Available Drives” and then clicking on “Settings” (see Figure 2 below).

Here you can switch off monitoring or re-set the amount of disk space on that drive that is used to store the restore information.



Figure 2

Once the facility is enabled, in future, any changes made to your system will cause Windows to create a “checkpoint” so that if anything goes wrong, you can restore Windows to that, or any other stored “checkpoint”.

To do this, you access the System Restore utility by going to START, ACCESSORIES, SYSTEM TOOLS and selecting SYSTEM RESTORE.



Figure 3

From here you can either (a) restore the computer to a previous time (checkpoint), or (b) set a manual checkpoint for future use.

If you select (a), then you are asked to select the day and which checkpoint on that day you wish to restore to.



Figure 4

Finally, select NEXT and the system will carry out a restore. You are warned that the system will restart during the restore process.

If you require further assistance in carrying out a system restore, call Alan Finch on (01224) 697457.

We wish to acknowledge with thanks that some of the material contained within this publication has been sourced from Computer Weekly, PC Pro, BBC and other reputable sources..

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