

By August 2007, Editor, Software Reviews

Cesar - Oldie But Goldie

Set it up fast and start sharing

Do you remember the times when the FTP frenzy was all over the place? Everybody turned their computer into a server. You could share your files with your friends safely and with no hassle. The only major obstacle was the Internet speed that was not mature enough for our needs. Today the possibilities for sharing files with your friends are numerous and there is a much larger pool to fish in. The Hassle has been completely eliminated, and you can easily give access to your files. My favorite application is [HFS](#), which turns your computer into a web server and permits both downloading and uploading files with amazing ease. But FTP is not dead yet. I got hold on an ancient application and decided to put it against modern technology and operating system. CesarFTP used to be a must for anyone that wanted to be the proud owner of a FTP server. From the last update (about 2003), time seems to have stopped for it. To my amazement, the application has the same functionality on Vista Business Edition as it had back in the days of Windows XP. Regarding the looks, I guess it is enough to say that they are not Vista compatible, but the emphasis is clearly on functionality. Its features include server and user settings that allow you to make a configuration suitable to your system. The first thing to do after starting the application is populate it with user accounts. The tutorial in Help menu is more than explanatory and there is no way you can fail. Users can be incorporated into **groups** for a better management. For each user you have to specify the login details (username and password) but you can also grant anonymous access. What is amazing about the password is that it comes with a password generator for a better protection. The downside is that there are no settings available for this and all it can do is provide a 9 character alpha numeric password which contains special characters as well. Additional configuration lets you specify different **restriction** for each exploiter of the FTP server. As an administrator of the server, you can impose download speed limits, allot a restricted number of connection or a timeout limit. Further "powers" permit banning users from accessing the server or enable ratio for making sure that the user is not a leecher and also likes to donate files from time to time. And, if you know him/her you can add personal details like name, address and some notes. As any other FTP server, the default communication port is 21, but if your network feels differently, you're always free to change it. To avoid overload, a maximum number of users can be set and if someone insists on logging in, s/he can be granted a strict number of tries after which a **kick** or **ban** penalty enters into force. Mobility is another advantage of the application as it allows you to **remotely control** the server. For this to happen, a password and port number need to be set. For a better view at the activity of the users you have **Statistics**. It'll show the connection ID and date for each accounts, the accessed directory, download/upload speed, ratio or quota credit. Idle time is also shown so that you know how much time the user spends just staring at the files and folders. In case a user needs to **upload** a bunch of files on the server, you can grant him/her this right by making a few settings in File Access Rights window (all the folder and file related permissions are located at the bottom of the screen). There is also a very good tutorial on this matter explaining each step you have to take in order to achieve the desired result. However, you are going to need an FTP client for this matter as a regular drag and drop in the browser won't do the trick. Actually, a colleague of mine succeeded this operation in Maxthon, but I was not that lucky. After all these years, Cesar proved to be a good file sharing companion. It is very easy to set up and works like a charm. If you find it difficult to configure refer to the Help menu as it is a very comprehensive file covering all issues. The looks are tasteless, but it can still do its job responsibly. **The Good** Fast and easy setup are among the most applauded features of the application. The help file is pervasive enough to cover every aspect of setting it up. The administrator of the server can properly manage all the accounts and can ban or kick them. Statistics gives all essential detail about current activity of the user and for more comprehensive information, you can activate all the log options of the application. **The Bad** The project is still not mature enough to satisfy all the needs we might have nowadays. It does a great job indeed, but modern users have different needs and more control. I wish the administrator had the possibility of putting certain files under a lock (e.g. new large files that are currently uploading on the server). A better interface would contribute to increasing its value and bringing it to year 2007 although

redesigning it is not primordial. **The Truth**Cesar proved that it can stand the test of time and did it exceptionally... for an old man. There is still room for more options and features (e.g. integrating an FTP client) but it seems that the developer has abandoned the project. However, CesarFTP is still a good instrument to share your files and manage downloading others. I really hope the project is revived one way or another, as it is still worth it. *Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*