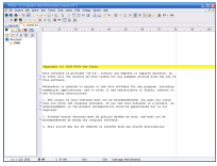


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By: Codrut Nistor, Editor, Software Reviews



## **Text Editing for Everybody!**

### *Meet PSPad, an excellent free text editor!*

I think that since I reviewed the last text editor some time has passed, and this is not the only reason for my choice now. Some days ago I found out about an awesome text editor and I thought you have to see it as soon as possible. Now that moment has arrived, and I hope you will be pleased by my choice. Notepad and Wordpad, the default text editors from Windows so far, can edit text. Just that. No syntax highlighting, no ability to use external compilers, change files from FTP servers, use text templates and many more. There are a lot of answers to these problems, coming in the form of different commercial computer programs. As always, some good stuff come for free, and this is what I will get to next. PSPad is a full-featured text editor that is completely free and can successfully help any user out there looking for a powerful text editing solution that won't dry out their budget. Downloading and installing it are no problem, since the setup file has 3.1MB and the process goes on smoothly, without much trouble. If you choose the Custom install mode, you will have the freedom to choose which components to support, and for people in a hurry, there are the Full and Compact installation modes. The interface of this program makes me think about Ultra Edit or Em Editor, but I think it even gets better than those. Everything is done to maximize efficiency: you have a rich menu bar, a toolbar, a tool panel, the work area and more additional windows, like the log window or the Code Explorer. But let's start with the beginning. When creating a new file, I got hit by the large number of file types available and the even larger amount of templates for them (for example, you have five HTML and three PHP templates, and these are not the only ones).

The file has been created, you wrote some lines and now you want to know where you stand. The answer is easy to obtain: open the File menu and click the File Info item. Incredible for a free program, rarely seen in the commercial ones too, but you can get information such as characters and words frequency, apart from the regular word and character count! This can be great for people writing keyword-based articles, and not only for them, it can also help you fine tune your vocabulary (when using a word too many times it may become annoying, and this statistic can help you avoid that). PSPad editor supports multiple file editing, allows you to organize your windows as you like. You can go for a tabbed interface, a cascaded one or with vertical or horizontal tiles. Remote files can be edited straight from the server, you don't need any other tool, because this program has even a built in FTP client that does its job perfectly. Since I told you about this, let's see what other great tools we can find inside this program... Well, we have a file browser, a project manager, a bookmark manager that allows you to bookmark files, directories, Web locations or tools and an opened files manager, but this is only a small part of it. Recording and playing macro commands is a task extremely easy to accomplish in PSPad, as well as clipboard monitoring or HTML code cleaning using TiDy. The Code Explorer helps you quickly go through your code, displaying functions, macro definitions and including files inside an easy to navigate tree view. The files that can be handled by this tool are those containing HTML, XML and C source code. People using this program for HTML code editing will be very pleased to find the color tools available here. You get a color picker, called Eye Dropper, a color selector and an extremely useful color translator that can convert a color name into HTML color code, percent or RGB notation. It's enough to know only one of these and you will get the others! Text differences between two files can be shown displaying them side by side, and if you want to go deeper, you can even edit them using the integrated HEX editor. The feature list goes on and on for pages, and I am sure that everybody can find its secret wishes concerning text editors fulfilled here. Spell

checker, integrated CSS editor, external commands (you can use external compilers, for example), HASH generator, an internal Web browser for previewing your pages, Google search tool...all for free! I am stunned. Using this program is like receiving a free Ferrari just because you need a car or the one you own it's not fine anymore... **The Good** Even though PSPad is free, this comes in the end, after its ease of use, its incredible complexity and amount of features. The interface is up to date, clean and easy to use, while the Help system is enough to get you running the program at full speed. PSPad can replace Notepad the same way as Ultra Edit and other editors (you have to overwrite the original Notepad.exe with a file that starts PSPad instead). **The Bad** While the Help system is good, is still behind the program's looks and features, but that shouldn't be much of a problem. The CSS editor must be downloaded separately, because it doesn't come with the program. **The Truth** The truth is that programs like PSPad make me wonder how other companies can even dare of asking money for products much weaker with fewer features than this kind of freeware products! There's no doubt here - PSPad is a "must have" for everyone editing text files! *Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*