

By: April 2008, Editor, Software Reviews

Heftier Windows File Search

Faster result retrieval

Situation: a couple of months ago, you saved a file somewhere on your computer and now you want to use it, but the only problem is that its storage location has been forgotten and you can only remember part of the name. Or, you simply know the exact location, but due to the huge crowd in the folder and the lack of organizational skills, the file simply escapes your view, no matter what. Solution: a good file indexing tool would come in handy but, because you never bothered to install one, this is no longer feasible. So you are practically stuck with Windows search tool which we all know how uncomfortable and time wasting can be. If you are running Windows XP, one way around the problem would be Search GT, an application designed as an alternative to the default Windows search that provides better functionality, shorter search times and the same comfortable ease of use. It comes at a \$19.95 price and 30 days of trial with no restriction whatsoever. There is no interface, as Search GT function integrates perfectly in Windows Explorer and accessing it is done by simply pressing the Search GT button in Explorer. Given the familiar interface, users should have absolutely no problem handling it. The options available are not much different from Windows File Search Tool, but the results are retrieved with extraordinary speed, since it can take as little as a couple of seconds to find matching results out of millions of files. Suffice to type in the name of the file or just part of it and define the locations to be scanned, and the application will do the rest. Additional options permit recursive folder raking, looking in system folders, or seeking among hidden files. More customization options for a more advanced search are ready for you, as the software permits narrowing the hunt to files of a certain size or with a specific modification date interval. Sure, these details are almost never remembered by the user, so Search GT offers the possibility of setting up an interval, for both size (minimum and maximum) and date. Given the perfect integration with Windows Explorer the app makes it easy for you to cut, copy, paste or delete the results in the list, as the same options are accessible from the context menu. As a plus in comparison to Windows File Search tool, Search GT can save the list of results in a TXT file giving the complete path to the returned result. The software will not cripple your system by unnecessarily use of resources, actually it will have little impact, because it does not need to index the files on the computer, so no background operation will take place. It simply moves with great speed and shows the results in extremely short times. Just like its counterpart in the operating system, Search GT can give you the complete list of music files on the hard drive, or of pictures, or video. More than this, it can return results according to user-defined extensions. The most popular of them are available by default (MP3, WAV, WMA, JPEG, BMP, GIF, AVI, MPEG), but the list can be customized to suit your needs and you can add new formats, as well as create groups of formats to be looked up. On the downside, the software can give you a tough time if you are trying to search for part of a name accompanied by the appropriate extension. Actually, no result will be retrieved and you have to either feed it with the part of the name or look for all the files within the same format. Sure, in this case, Windows Explorer's sorting options come in handy, but it would have been nice to have the possibility of searching for part of the name according to the file format as well. The application fits perfectly in Windows Explorer and can be accessed in six ways: desktop icon, from Explorer toolbar, from Start>Programs, Start>Search, View menu of Explorer bar or at right clicking on any drive or folder. It moves very fast and the results are as accurate as defined by the search criteria. "*" and "?" wildcards are accepted for a wider range of results to be retrieved and you can create customized search groups that include special extensions to be hunted down. The major downside is that it works only on Window XP, 2000 and 2003. **The Good** It integrates in Windows Explorer and can be easily accessed six ways till Sunday. All options are easy to handle and understand, while the results are extremely accurate and speedily returned. The application can search in subfolders, within hidden and system files. Users can search by extension or just using part of the file name and there is the possibility of creating groups of extensions to be searched all at once. **The Bad** Compatibility with Windows OSs does not include Vista. Once started, it takes about 8MB of RAM and, even if you turn it off from Explorer, the amount of memory usage is still present in Task Manager. In order to kill it completely, users have to close the Explorer window the search has been made in. **The Truth** Search GT

comes as a great alternative to Windows File Search as it displays the results with much greater speed, proving itself an incredible time saver. However, it will not work on the latest operating system from Microsoft and it cannot retrieve results if only part of the name and the extension is typed in. Also, the price is a major downside considering that there are freebies that carry out the search job with the same success, even though they come with an indexing algorithm. *Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*