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SortSite

## Website Revision

*See the issues of your website*

Have you ever thought about testing the quality of the websites you are surfing? I have and even found an application that will automatically do this. It is intended for company use, but the 30 days trial period will give home users a chance to testing it on the websites they are surfing. SortSite is a desktop utility designed to follow all the links on a website and produce a comprehensive report on the quality issues discovered. Very easy to use, this tool can work with practically anything you feed it, from projects that are yet not finalized (websites in development) to websites behind a firewall. As it is designed for companies, the price is also a corporate one, the professional version reaching \$499. The interface is far from tawdry and the console is user friendly due to the intuitive icons in the toolbar and very well organized. There is absolutely nothing complicated in handling the software as everything is automatic and the only manual instance you are going to experience is the typing in of the URL you want to check. The steps to verifying the quality of a website are few and easy. First you have to enter the address of the website. The next thing is press the Check button in the toolbar. You are done for now as the software will begin the verification and all you have to do is wait for the job to complete. The process can be stopped at any time and SortSite will display the results for the checked links and pages. Every session can be saved on the HDD for later analysis. The report consists in displaying the pages with issues (you will be displayed with the address for every link that has a problem). The problems a website can confront with go from errors (placeholder text, script etc.), compliance issues (EU and US laws), standards (W3C standards), compatibility (triggering browser bugs, or determine a browser specific behavior, HTML compatibility etc.), accessibility (problems for disabled users), usability (navigation problems) and search (website optimization). Besides the 30 days use for the trial version SortSite comes with different other limitations that will cripple the evaluation edition and will restrict the viewing of some issue descriptions. This way you will not be able to see always the detailed presentation of the issue. Interesting enough is the summarized report displayed immediately after the website verification is complete. For each issue category, you will be able to see the number of pages that have similar issues and a little bechmarking that will tell you if the analyzed website is better or worse than the average. In the lower part of the page there is a graphic display of the pages with issues. The benchmarking options allow the user to compare it with websites from different domains, like Technology, Professional Services, Government, Financial Services or against all of them. Scheduling the verification of a website is pretty easy as the application uses Windows Task Manager for this. I was expecting a built-in scheduling option, but it seems that the application works very well with Windows' tool. As you may know, the task can be repetitive and the time of the activity can be set in detail. Each session stores its own details and for each website you can have the options configured differently. The list of options available in SortSite includes searching for certain keywords that you want to be found by search engines, block some links (prevent the application to follow certain links), type in the addresses from a different domain (e.g. [www.softpedia.com](http://www.softpedia.com), <http://win.softpedia.com>, <http://news.softpedia.com>), choose the tools to browse and view the source of the website for a faster identification of the problem. Advanced options allow you how much of the site to explore (you can limit the number of links to explore from the start page), choose the HTML file extension, or configure the timeouts for server load and page timeout (the former goes from 0.5 to 10 seconds per page while the latter goes from 10 seconds to 60 minutes). **The Good** The application is extremely easy to use and you do not need special information in order to handle it, but for

fixing the problems you will have to know where to go and how to repair the problems. During the scanning of the page, the user will be presented with the number of pages that have been discovered and the number of links that have been checked. **The Bad** For home users, the price is untouchable. For companies, it seems like a good bargain. However, there are certain limitations that prevent fully testing the application in trial mode. During the scanning, there is no time estimating bar to tell you how much you will have to wait. This can be kinda tricky as there are websites with millions of pages and estimating the time would be pretty difficult, but showing the elapsed time from the beginning of the operation can be of help sometimes. **The Truth** Test it and decide for yourselves. The rules the application is based on can sometimes give you a bit of trouble, but these can be reported to the publisher and future releases of the application can be improved. You can also disable some of the rules as you wish. *Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*