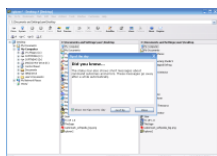


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## Double Your Xplore Power

*Prepare your files to be managed*

What do you use to manage the files on your computer? I bet that most of you are using either Windows Explorer or Christian Ghisler's Total Commander. File managers are all over the place now so you have where to choose from. Some of these softwares are better than the others, but their end is the same: to allow the user easier access to the files on the hard drive and better management of the folders. The application I am going to present today is one of the most efficient file managers from all the similar softwares I have seen (except Total Commander). Its name is Xplorer2 and it is developed by (let me grab my copy/paste) Zavarakatranemia. The evaluation period is 21 days and after that you will have to pay \$26.94. Xplorer2 is a tabbed dual pane file manager that is very easy to use and handle. The developer says that, in most cases, the user can get full functionality by installing a recent version of Internet Explorer. The main application screen is divided into several windows designed to grant faster access to your files. Although it is a dual pane file manager, the main window has three panes: the regular panes and a third one that is explorer like and which will - in a way - "dictate" the view in the other two. Another window (QuickView) can be launched by the user by clicking on the Preview button in the toolbar. Upon selecting a picture in one of the panes this window will display the contents. If you select a video or audio file, this will be played by Windows Media Player. Pictures will also be displayed in this window. You may want to view all the pictures in here, so the software has anticipated your desire and by pressing Ctrl+Down/Up you will be able to view all of them. The tabs, unlike other tabbed file manager, are displayed at the bottom of the pane by default (but their location can be changed to top). A surprise for me was that you can rename the tabs you open and they will stay renamed even if you close the application. To open a new tab, the user can use the keyboard shortcut Ctrl+Insert. If you find dual panes a little annoying or crowded, you can switch to single pane view and you will have a file manager resembling Windows Explorer. There is no Up One Level button, but pressing Backspace will have the same effect, as well as double clicking on the folder name bar in a clear spot. In order to close the opened tabs, you can double click it or press the X at the end of the bar. The Address bar serves multiple functions, like showing the path of the item in the active folder. You can type in the path to a certain folder in order to load it, or apply filters to view only the files with a certain extension and hide the others. It can also serve to connect to a FTP server. The toolbar contains the buttons for the most used commands: Copy, Delete, Find, Parent (Up One Level), Drive, Back, Forward, Views, etc. The Drives bar contains the drives you have on your hard disks. At the beginning, I thought that it lacked the Network drive, but I soon realized that it can be accessed from the tree pane. In the toolbar you will see a button that reads To Scrap. The scrap Container is used to store randomly collected scraps of information. Due to this feature, you can check for duplicates and delete them. This is a useful feature that will help you create some space on your machine. The Program Options menu can be accessed from the Tools menu. There are three tabs in here: General, Window and Advanced. These options allow the user to set an external text editor and viewer, the thumbnail size, save the program state on exit; choose the color for the inactive window, the horizontal or vertical tiling of the panes or the font of the text. If you encounter any problems with maneuvering the software, at the beginning of the installation, choose to get the user's manual also. I turned blue when I saw that it had 336 pages, so I gather it contains all the information you need. **The Good** The software is excellent and with that kind of help you will definitely find your way through the application's options. The tree pane was a good idea, although at first it seemed a little uncomfortable.

QuickView window is also an asset for the software, and the fact that the user can set an external viewer and text editor makes it a tough competitor. **The Bad!** had trouble moving around because I am used to different shortcuts (but this is just because of me). The New Folder shortcut (F8 key) applied a blue mask over my whole screen and – to create a new folder - I had to take the long way and go to Actions>New Folder. After running a command (F10 for DOS) you will have to press enter in order to be executed. I did not like the fact that I could change only the color of the inactive window. A little color all over the place did not hurt anyone. But there is time to improve the application, as it is only in its 1.6 version. The icons in the toolbar are too small. **The Truth!** liked this application, it moved fast and obeyed my commands. For what it has to offer the price is pretty good. I just hope that new features and improving awaits us. The customizable toolbar lets the user add more buttons and use separators to sort them. *Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*