DropDMG 1.0 Manual

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1 Introduction

DropDMG is a utility for creating disk images in Mac OS X's device image (DMG) format. Disk images are a wonderful way of packing entire folders or disks into a single file, either for transport across the Internet or simply for achival. They are typically created using Apple's Disk Copy utility, and Disk Copy can also "mount" an image—make its contents accessible as if they resided on an inserted CD-ROM.

Although Disk Copy is a standard component of Mac OS X, it makes simple tasks more time consuming than they should be. To create a compressed image from a folder using Disk Copy, you must create a blank read-write image of the appropriate size (specifying the volume name and location for the saved file), manually copy the folder to the image, unmount the image, convert the image to a compressed format, and finally delete the original (uncompressed) image. With DropDMG, you simply drag and drop the folder onto the DropDMG icon[1].

Documents   DropDMG   Documents.dmg

DropDMG does not aim to duplicate all the functionality of Disk Copy. Instead, it focuses on providing quick and easy access to the most commonly used features. Here's a brief rundown of DropDMG:

- Quick and easy creation of compressed disk images in Mac OS X's zlib-compressed (UDZO) format. Just drag and drop a folder onto the DropDMG application's icon.

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[1]Really. There aren't any dialog boxes; it's even easier than in Mac OS 9.

- Reliability. Like all good Mac applications[2], DropDMG has no trouble handling folders with spaces, quotation marks, dollar signs, or other "special" characters.

- Clean and simple interface that stays out of your way and respects your screen real estate.

- Create images using AppleScript.

- Runs natively on Mac OS X.

2   Installation

DropDMG has been developed and tested on Mac OS X 10.1.2. I do not have the resources to test it on older systems, although I suspect it will work fine on Mac OS X 10.1 or later. Mac OS X 10.1 or later is also required to mount images created with DropDMG, as earlier versions of Mac OS X do not support the UDZO format.
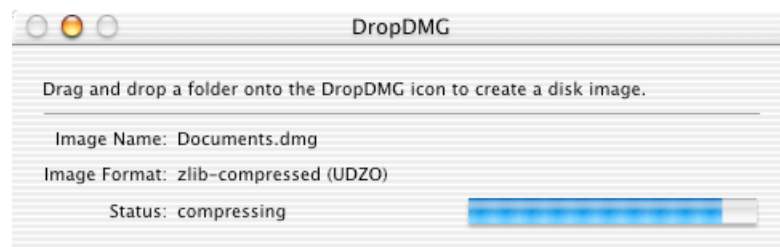
Double-click the `DropDMG-1.0.dmg` file to mount the image with Disk Copy. If you like, you can run DropDMG directly from the image to test it out. To install, simply copy the application to your hard disk, e.g. into `/Applications/Utilities`.

There's no need to copy this manual to your hard disk. A copy of it is built-into DropDMG, and you can access it by choosing DropDMG Help from the Help menu.

3   Using DropDMG

There are several ways to create disk images using DropDMG:

Drag and Drop Drag and drop one or more folders onto the DropDMG icon, either in the Finder or in the Dock.

Menu Use the Open... command in DropDMG's File menu to select a folder.

AppleScript Get a folder reference and tell DropDMG to `open` it:

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[2]But, sadly, unlike many quick-and-dirty utilities and shell scripts.

```
tell application "Finder"
    -- ask the user
    set myFolder to choose folder

    -- or use a path
    alias "HD:Users:me:folder:"
end tell
tell application "DropDMG"
    open myFolder
end tell
```

Command-Line Use open and pass the folders as arguments:

```
open -a DropDMG.app ~/path/to/a/folder ~/another/folder
```
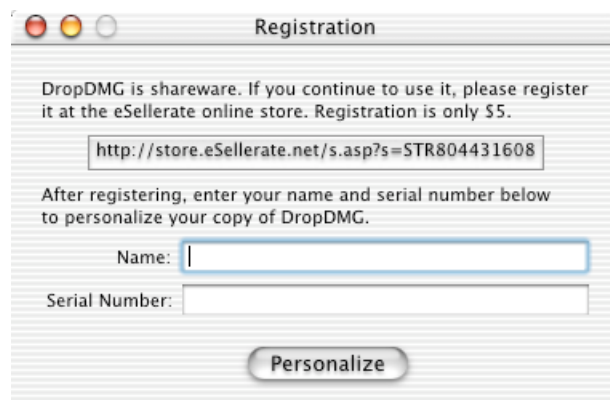
4 Contact Information

The DropDMG Web site is located at http://www.c-command.com/dropdmg/. Questions about DropDMG may be sent to mailto:support@c-command.com. I'm always looking to improve DropDMG, so please feel free to send any feature requests to that address.

To make sure that you have the latest version of DropDMG, you may wish to subscribe to the DropDMG Announcements mailing list. To sign up, send an e-mail to mailto:requests@c-command.com with subject subscribe dropdmg-announce. The traffic on this list is very low, only one message per new version of DropDMG.

5 Registering

DropDMG is shareware. If you find yourself using DropDMG beyond a reasonable trial period, you must register it. Registration costs $5 (US) and entitles you to free updates and support.

To register, go to http://store.eSellerate.net/s.asp?s=STR804431608. Soon after paying, you'll receive an e-mail with your serial number. Enter it in the Registration window to personalize your copy of DropDMG.

This is the honor system. If you use DropDMG without registering, I probably won't know. However, registering will give me an incentive to continue updating and enhancing DropDMG, and to write more Mac software. And you won't have to look at the "Unregistered" in the status window anymore.

6   Notes and Limitations

- DropDMG always saves images at the same level as the folder being imaged. The volume must have free space at least equal to twice the size of the folder, because DropDMG needs some free space to compress the image.

- Dragging a volume onto DropDMG creates an image that contains the volume's *contents*, not an image of the *device*. Use Disk Copy to create images of devices, e.g. to make an image of a bootable CD-ROM.

  – Images of volumes will be saved in `/Volumes`, which is only accessible using the Finder's Go to Folder... command (or Terminal).

  – DropDMG cannot create an image of the startup volume. (You'll get a slightly confusing error message.)

- DropDMG cannot create images of folders that contain locked files. (I think this is a limitation of `ditto`.)

- DropDMG cannot create images of folders that are larger than 4 GB.

Future versions of DropDMG may address these issues.

7   Version History

1.0   • First public release.

8   Legal Stuff

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Please distribute the unmodified `DropDMG-1.0.dmg` file on the Web, LANs, compilation CD-ROMs, etc. Please do not charge for it (beyond a reasonable cost for media), or distribute the contents of the image file in isolation.

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