"There are two types of computer users:
those who backup,
and those who WILL..."

EVACopy

by

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Version 5.2

Quick Start using EVACopy

Follow this guide to quickly start using EVACopy, and practice it hands-on. This guide delivers the basics you need to know to properly use EVACopy. It is recommended to print this guide, it is easier following it when printed (otherwise you'll need to minimize and restore it often).

When you're done with this guide, and EVACopy is up and running, it is recommended you read the users manual. The manual gets you acquainted with some more features, advanced use and best practices.

Step 1 – Get EVACopy and take it for a test drive

EVACopy is basically a single executable program file (EVACopy.exe), which is the only file actually needed. The rest are utilities, auxiliary and documentary files; one of them you're reading right now.

1. Download the archive from http://evacopy.sourceforge.net and extract to a folder of your choice, something like "C:\EVACopy\". Hint: the desktop is a BAD place for programs!
2. By contrast, the desktop is a good place to put shortcuts to programs. I assume you know how to do that, so create a shortcut to EVACopy.exe on your desktop.
3. Run EVACopy. Note the tray icon!
4. Since it is the first time EVACopy is launched, and it is not configured yet (i.e. the settings file was not created), you see a message indicating this. Click [OK] to launch the configuration utility.
5. Note that the tray icon disappeared. Why? This is because EVACopy terminated, and the configuration utility is actually a different program. There are several advantages in separating the auxiliary functions (configuration, restoration, other tools) from the main function (backup with versioning):
   - ✓ The memory consumption is reduced – only the main function is a work.
   - ✓ You can apply the auxiliary functions on other users' data (e.g. restore files for them using the program on your workstation).
   - ✓ You can configure EVACopy simultaneously while using it. Actually, we will now demonstrate it while using this guide.
6. Minimize the configuration window.
7. For this tryout, create a new folder, for example "C:\source\".
8. Copy some files and folders into "C:\source\".
9. Restore the configuration window.
10. Click the [Add new pair] button (in the "Paths and Exclusions" tab).

11. In the "Source" line, write **C:\source**, or click the [Browse] button and select it.
12. In the "Destination" line, write **C:\dest**. If you'd like to click the [Browse] button and select it, you'll need to create it first; otherwise there is no need to create the destination folder, EVACopy will create it if necessary.
    Note: if you chose a long file name for your folders, you do NOT need to enclose it in "" (double-quotes).
13. Click [Keep] to keep your settings in memory. This will also assign a descriptive name to the pair (by the name of the source folder), if you didn't assign a name for it yourself.
14. Click [Save] to save your kept settings to a file.
15. Minimize the configuration window.
16. For the next steps, create a simple text file in the source folder, type some text in it, and save it. We'll use it later on.
17. Run EVACopy. Wait for it to end (that's when the tray icon disappears). The first backup may take several minutes, depending on the size of files and subfolders in the source. But if there are only few files there, most likely it would take seconds.
18. For now, ignore the "User Note" message, and click [OK].

Step 2 – See what you've got

When EVACopy is done, browse the destination folder (C:\dest\). You should see an exact copy of the source folder (C:\source\).

So what's the point, you ask? Well, so far we haven't done anything other than file copying. You'll find the true power of EVACopy is unveiled in the subsequent backup operations.

1. Make some modifications to the source folder: create a new file, edit or delete an existing file, create a subfolder and move some files into it, delete a subfolder, whatever. Also, add some text to the file you created in step 1.16 and save it.
2. Run EVACopy again. This time it should work much faster, because its focus is on the changes you made.
3. When EVACopy is done, browse the destination folder. You should see an exact copy of the source after the modifications. So?
4. This is where things get interesting. Enable "Show hidden files and folders" (in Windows Explorer, select **Tools**, then select **Folder Options...** and go to the **View** tab).
5. Browse the destination folder again. Now you see another subfolder named "_EVAC". Inside there's another folder, its name indicates the time EVACopy was run, in the format YYYY-MM-DD-hh-mm (year,month,day,hour,minute).
6. Browse this folder. Inside you'll see the files and folders you modified or deleted, in the same directory structure as they were in the source. Among them you'll see the text file you were working on. These are the files **as they were before you modified them**. This folder is the folder they were evacuated to, before being overwritten by their latest versions. This is why this folder is called *the evacuation folder*.

Step 3 – Keep up the good work

Let's see what happens when you keep working normally.

1. Open the file you modified in step 2.1, modify and save it again.
2. Run EVACopy.
3. Browse the evacuation folder. Note that another subfolder was created there, by a name corresponding to the time of the backup you just performed. In it there's only the text file (unless you made some other modifications while I wasn't looking).

So now, there are three versions of that text file: the latest is where it should be – directly in the destination folder – and the earlier are in the hidden evacuation folder. If you need to restore an earlier version of any file or folder, modified or deleted, **this is where it'll be**.

Step 4 – Back and forth

Now let's see an easier way to locate earlier versions of files and folders:

Let's assume that the last modification you made to the text file actually messed it up. In the destination – ignoring the evacuation folder – there is only the messed-up version of it (That would also be the result of using many common backup or synchronization programs).
But you want the earlier version of that file!

You can browse the evacuation folder, like you just did. However, after many backup operations, there will be many folders and subfolders to browse through... Instead, use Windows built-in search:

1. Right-click "_EVAC" and select "Search...". Fill in the file name (or part of it), and click "Search".
2. In the results pane, you get a list of all earlier versions of this file. In addition, it tells you where they are located. Recall that the name of the folder is actually the date and time at which the files inside were evacuated.
3. Double-click the file in the folder corresponding to the date and time you prefer, and open the file. You can open the files directly from the evacuation folder without the need of an elaborate restore operation!
4. If that file is not the one you were looking for, select another one from the list of results. Once you've found your file, simply copy it back to the source.

Note: The same procedure applies in case you want to restore an earlier version of an entire folder.

Note: Searching for folders rather than files is also useful in case you deleted a file and you want it back, but you can't remember its name. If you remember, even roughly, in which folder that file was, search for that folder within the evacuation folder.

Step 5 – What have I done ?

Mainly for troubleshooting purposes, EVACopy produces a log file. This is a simple text file, located in the evacuation folder, named "EVACopy-log-YYYY-MM-DD-hh-mm.txt".
Needless to say, the file name corresponds to the time of the backup.

You can open the file in Notepad (or any other text editor). Take a minute to study it.

By default, it only tells you what files were evacuated and/or copied. As a starting point for troubleshooting, that's enough. If so happens and you need a more detailed log, you can change the logging mode configuration. In any case, if the phrase **ERROR!** Appears in the log file, something went wrong. Look for that phrase in the log file.

For more details about the log file, see the manual.

Step 6 – Go automatic

EVACopy has a Resident feature, which allows it to remain resident (as a tray icon) and to automatically initiate a backup job when the user is idle for some time (by default it's one minute). Via the tray icon menu you can also initiate a backup job manually, browse folders, review and restore earlier versions of files, change program settings, etc.

To start the Resident feature:
1. Restore the configuration window.
2. In the "Backup at idle" drop-down list, select "active".
3. Click [Keep]
4. No other modifications at the moment, so click [Save].
5. Close the configuration window.
6. Launch EVACopy. This time, the tray icon remains resident; and nothing else happened (EVACopy can be configured to start a backup at start; by default, this is not set).
7. To initiate a backup, you can click the tray menu and select **Backup Now**; alternatively, you can just go to the bathroom or take a break longer then 1 minute, and a backup will be initiated automatically.
8. To temporarily stop the automatic backup at idle time: click the tray menu, hover over **Backup at Idle**, and click the pair name to remove the checkmark. This is in effect only until EVACopy is re-launched, the configuration is re-loaded, or you click it again to add the checkmark.

From now on, you need to start EVACopy just once, and it will remain resident. If you wish to make EVACopy start automatically when Windows starts, move EVACopy shortcut from the desktop (or from wherever it is) to the Startup folder in the Windows Start Menu.

Step 7 – Change course

Now let's practice changing the configuration of EVACopy:
1. Click the tray menu, and select **Settings → Configure**.
2. This launches the same configuration utility you are familiar with. From the "Select to configure" dropdown list, select the pair we already set-up (by the descriptive name, "C:\source", unless you already changed it yourself).
3. Change the descriptive name to something more humane, like **test backup**.
4. Click [Keep], then click [Save].
5. Note the comment in purple at the bottom-right corner next to the [Save] button. Recall that the configuration utility is actually a different program, and after you saved the configuration, the main program needs to reload it.
6. Click the tray menu, and select **Settings → Reload**.
7. Verify your change: click the tray menu, hover over **Backup at Idle**, and see that the new name appears.

Step 8 – Get real

Now you are ready to use EVACopy on your own files. To do that, repeat the last step, only change the "source" and "Destination" to the real folders you wish to backup. You can set-up additional pairs, select for each pair if it should be backed-up at idle-time, set exclusion rules and other operational parameters, etc. You can parameterize folder names; replace the settings file "EVACopy.ini" with "EVACopy-example.ini" and see for yourself how it's defined.

Step 9 – Go manual

The manual has in-depth explanations and examples about how EVACopy works, the settings file, command-line parameters and exit codes, batch file integration, log file, best practices, and plenty more very neat stuff indeed!