File and Directory Management

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28th Summer Seminar on Population

Workshop 2

Planning Utilization of the 2000 Round Census Results

Why Management is Necessary

- Even simple projects generate scores or hundreds of computer files

- Work is facilitated by conscious attention to organizing these files

- These notes provide practical suggestions based on experience with many projects

The Tools

- **Explorer** in Windows 95 or **File Manager** in Windows 3; learn to use the 'drag and drop' interface for moving files and directories

- A **DOS Window** will also be useful if you are familiar with the more powerful command line switches

Rule Number 1: Limit the Number of Items in a Directory

- A good rule of thumb is to keep no more than a screen full of files and/or directories in any one directory

- This avoids scrolling in windows to find what your want

- Of course there are exceptions, as to every rule, but aim to follow this one most of the time

Rule Number 2: Exploit the heirarchical file system

- If you find that a directory is getting too full, find a basis for subdivision and move subgroups of files to subdirectories
- At 20 lines per screen, one level of subdirectories will accommodate 400 files, two levels 8000 files, and three levels 160,000 files

Rule Number 3: Think through a logical organization

- Organize files by file type, by time period, by geographical location, by stages of project, by people involved in project

- Many different organizations are possible, and often several will compete and show tradeoffs

- Organization typically needs to be revised as project proceeds

Rule Number 4: User 'readme' files

- By tradition, a *readme* file is a text file that provides information about the directory in which it is located

- Use readme files to record information that will be useful to others or that your are likely to forget in the future

- Create readme file with a text editor, **edit** (DOS), **notepad**, **TextPad**, etc.

The Importance of File and Directory Management

- *Productivity*: if you don't manage files and directories, you will end up losing work and having to do it over again
- *Quality*: without proper management, old files will become confused with newer versions and errors will be introduced into work

Questions?
Comments?
Discussion?

The End

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