Flex
Feature Sheet

Metalogic

FLEX is a file management tool designed to:
- control disk space usage
- provide virtual disk capabilities
- automate file backup and recovery
- manage pack families
- provide enhanced file maintenance commands

FLEX has the ability to apply OPAL (rules-based methodology) to disk/file management and operations. The product is available at 2 levels : FLEX Inquiry and Full FLEX.

Where other pack managers attempt to circumvent the MCP, FLEX has been integrated with the MCP. Wherever possible, it takes advantage of standard MCP features, files, utilities, and requires no patches to the MCP. The result is a seamless environment where the MCP and the pack manager act as a single entity in managing files and pack families. Most importantly, FLEX is an Expert System.

The Expert System

Expert Systems capture the knowledge of human experts in an electronic knowledge base. Using this knowledge, they make intelligent decisions - the same decisions that human experts would make if faced with identical circumstances. FLEX applies this Expert Systems technology to the problems of file and pack management—it is a rules-based Expert System. Using FLEX's powerful OPAL Expert Systems Language, the FLEX user defines rules that correspond to file and pack management policies. With OPAL, the FLEX user can define not only policies, but also the complex exceptions to policies.

OPAL includes extensive selection and reporting statements, allowing precise file identification, and giving the user Full control of report and screen layouts. OPAL attributes give the FLEX user access to unlimited file-related information, allowing file selection based on any conceivable criteria, and reports and displays that include any conceivable criteria. Even codefile data is available.

FLEX's Expert System design is the key to its flexibility. With conventional, hard-coded pack management tools, the user is forced to adapt to the pack manager. With FLEX, the pack manager adapts to the user, since the user actually instructs FLEX how to behave using

Expert Systems rules.

The Total Solution

The FLEX Family is based on two powerful products, **FLEX Inquiry** and **Full FLEX**. The higher level Full FLEX includes all of the features of lower-level FLEX Inquiry. The FLEX Family provides an integrated, total solution for file, pack, and family management.

FLEX Inquiry

The Ideal First Step Into The FLEX Family — FLEX Inquiry includes interactive file maintenance commands that are faster, safer, and more powerful than those found in CANDE. When listing files, for example, FLEX Inquiry displays 23 files per screen, and allows the user to browse up and down a Full screen at a time. Also, FLEX Inquiry's action mode displays a full screen of selected files, allowing the user to take specific actions on each file, including removal. When files are removed, FLEX Inquiry always verifies the request with the user prior to taking action.

Some important benefits are listed below:
- Increased programmer, operator, and user productivity
- Fewer accidental file deletions and other costly mistakes
- Interactive, context-sensitive help
- Intelligent lookup algorithm finds both exact and close topic matches
- Searches directories 20 to 1000 times faster than SYSTEM/FILECOPY

With FLEX Inquiry and OPAL, users can create powerful macros, including custom displays and reports, large scale file crunches and recompilations, and "Snap Backups." Backup times are reduced through intelligent file selection.

Using FLEX Inquiry's rules, the user can define and document file management policies in a single step. Simple rules can automatically remove unnecessary files, enforce file security, and manage other site policies.

Full FLEX

Adds Family, Rules Base, and Backup Tape Management to the features of FLEX Inquiry

Full FLEX supports Advanced Rules with Rules Base Management. The FLEX user can maintain any number of rules in the Rules Base. Full FLEX locates, resolves, and applies all rules for a given pack family simultaneously. Full FLEX includes friendly, interactive facilities for rules maintenance and testing. If desired, non-technical users can even define and test their own rules.

- All of the cost benefits of FLEX Inquiry rules, yet far easier to manage, boosting productivity
- Interactive rules maintenance and testing reduces file management time and prevents mistakes

Full FLEX enhances backup and recovery processing. Unless you define rules to the contrary, Full FLEX ensures that every file has two good backups, so you cannot forget to back up a file. By multitasking backups, Full FLEX dramatically increases backup speed. When possible, Full FLEX always places files onto a single tape for faster recovery. Full FLEX can also create special back-up sets that are ideal for fast disaster recovery. Full FLEX allows quick recovery from pack failures in large multi-pack families.

- Faster recovery from pack failures, reduced downtime and associated costs
- Large pack families become practical, more space-effective than small families
- Increased backup safety

Full FLEX implements an advanced, automatic space allocation technique known as Share-Based Space Allocation (SBSA). SBSA allocates disk space by shares rather than fixed segment limits. This way, segment limits adjust themselves automatically based on changes in active users or available pack space. SBSA is based around a hierarchical, multi-level group structure, so the FLEX user can allocate space at the division, department, and user levels. User departments can even manage their own space allocation.

The benefits of FLEX include:

- Greatly reduces time and effort versus manual space allocation
- Extends Virtual Disk concept for even more efficient pack utilization
- Ensures that pack space is fully utilized before releasing files and eliminates unnecessary file shuffling
- Optional space allocation by user departments puts responsibility in proper hands and reduces overall workload
- Full FLEX automatically merges backup tapes, freeing under-utilized tapes for

reuse. It can merge older files onto newer tapes, allowing files to be retained for five, ten, or even 25 years. No more wasted space
- Increases file security
- Less time wasted enforcing policies and doing file cleanups
- Reduces tape reel requirements and costs
- Makes long-term file storage safe and practical
- FLEX is easy to implement. FLEX Inquiry can be installed in an afternoon whilst Full FLEX, along with Cataloguing, can be installed within a week
- FLEX products come with a pre-defined Knowledge Base developed by METALOGIC and other expert MCP users
- This Expert Knowledge Base makes FLEX implementation even simpler, since most of the rules that you need to support sophisticated file management are already available.
- Offers lights-out and self-healing automated operations capabilities

Most MCP users can easily justify FLEX based on disk space savings alone. In fact, METALOGIC provides a Cost Justification Report with FLEX, which calculates approximately how much space FLEX can free, and translates that figure into financial savings.
FLEX is a file management software tool designed to control disk space, provide virtual disk capability, file backup and recovery, and manage pack families.

NEW!

Actions taken by Full Flex can now also be reported by email (to the owner of the files or a nominated 'Rules Manager').

In conjunction with the CopyWrite product, Full Flex can back up to Disk Farms (storage on any connected Windows server) or Disk Images (Virtual CDs held on MCP Disk).