

How to Create Self Extracting Zip Files.

by: Ed Zivkovic

What is a Self-Extracting Zip File?

A self-extracting zip file enables your computer to unzip zipped files without installing any new software.

The zip file gets converted to an exe file which once opened, unzips the contents to a predefined destination folder or a destination of your choice.

Why Create a Self-Extractor?

The other day, a customer purchased a resale rights eBook from my site then emailed me because she thought that I had not included a special file which would enable her computer to read files of the zip type.

Part of this is my fault because I had not clear instructions on the download page. I had used a generic "thank-you" page from the original author which did not explain the need to unzip the product.

The Solution? There was two options.

Option 1 - I could instruct the customer to go to winzip.com and download an evaluation version of WinZip. The customer would then have to install the software which in my opinion would be a bit time consuming and could cause confusion, frustration and maybe even resentment. After all, all the customer wants to do is access the product. Right?

I have been in a similar situation before and I know from experience that when I think I am getting "Instant Access", that is exactly what I want. I do not want to hear about the shortcomings of my computer system. I want my product and I want it now.

Option 2 - Create a self-extracting zip file. Because I own a registered version of WinZip, I am permitted to create zip files and self-extracting zip files and distribute them. This is exactly what I did in about three seconds flat. I then uploaded the file and emailed the customer with the download link and explained the situation.

Later I received a thank you email which I think I would not have received if I had chosen option number one.

How To Create a Self-Extracting Zip File

I myself only know how to do this with WinZip available from winzip.com. You need not have a head like Einstein for this.

1. Ensure you have WinZip Installed on your system.
2. Right mouse click on the zip file you would like to create a self-extractor for.
3. From the WinZip Menu, select "Create Self-Extractor (Exe)".
4. A Window will appear. Click OK and WinZip will create a self-extractor in a couple of seconds.

You can also select a default "unzip to" folder if you wish. If you leave this option blank, the self-extractor will unzip to a temp folder.

Notes

You will need to have a registered version of WinZip in order to distribute any file you create with WinZip. Files created with an unregistered version will display an UNREGISTERED message once the file is unzipped.

The author, Ed Zivkovic is the webmaster at Home Business Webmaster Tips. The site contains many useful tips for work at home webmasters.

This article may be re-published on your website or ezine.