

KickStarter Funding Plan for Spresso Software App

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From: Ken Whitaker
Leading Software Maniacs

Subject: KickStarter funding plan for Spresso software app

Goal

Goal is to get the initial implementation of Spresso partially funded on KickStarter.com. The minimum funding amount will be set at \$60,000 over a 45 day time period.

Synopsis



Spresso: Easy Project Versioning software

By Ken Whitaker

Spresso™ is a software app for your PC or Mac that saves all of your project's assets (files and folders) as a series of version backups.

Seattle, WA USA

Funding Proposal

Outline

A video is prominently displayed on the Kickstarter Web page (opening screen):



Synopsis (including box):



1. What does Spresso do?
2. So, who benefits?
3. Why is Spresso different?
4. How Spresso works
5. Expected result and time frame
6. What the funding will be used for
7. Appreciation to kickstarters

Proposal Content

What does Spresso do?

Spresso™ is a software application for your PC or Mac that saves all of your project's assets (files and folders) as a series of version backups. If you need to restore a version backup, Spresso will do that for you. Spresso is designed to be extremely easy to use and intuitive (especially for occasional use).

Perhaps this says it all:

"There are two kinds of people in the world: those who have a regular backup system—and those who will."

David Pogue, author "Mountain Lion: The Missing Manual"

The time to plan for version control is definitely not after you've made some disastrous changes to your graphics, Web site, software development, or publication project that you'd like to undo. Imagine finding out that the backup you thought you made didn't include all of your project files, or what worse, you never got around to making a backup at all. If nothing else, as your project work is updated, you have a great way to keep progress organized.

So, who benefits?

Anyone involved with computer-based projects that needs a simple way to organize and backup their work as versions:

- Photographers
- Graphics Designers
- Project managers
- Web site designers
- Book/eBook authors

Version management can be critical for everyone (even programmers!).

Spresso was disclosed to this graphics designer and he can't wait to try it out on his own project work:

"I am constantly trying to be organized with my work and have gotten better but still run into problems. I've definitely learned to make V1, V2, etc versions of my project to send to the client but that's not where I have issues. Its when I think everything is all approved and I make a 'Final' folder and move my 'asset' folder and all the other folders into it as well then they come back with a change, now I have a 'Final' folder within that one with Final_V1 and Final_V2 (because that makes a whole lot of sense...) Plus, assets get lost - missing links to media and graphics used in projects that I have to hunt down, or maybe I accidentally flattened a version in Photoshop and no longer have all the layers... Needless to say, the headaches are endless."

Could this be your nightmare, too?

Why is Spresso different?

You can always use the backup software that comes with your system. For example, Time Machine (available on OS X) back ups file changes in the background throughout the day. Backups of your entire disks are saved about every hour. Windows has a similar Backup and Restore capability. How in the world do you remember the day or time for specific changes you've made?

You can't (unless you take down some notes identifying project status the time of day)!

There are outstanding backup software tools available for both Windows and OS X. These alternatives offer very sophisticated backup features, but they still perform time-based backups and these apps tend to have lots of options that can be confusing to use and there's still no concept of tracking by version number.

There are several revision control systems available like git, CVS, Subversion, and many others. These source code control programs provide an excellent way to keep track of assets based on check-ins (similar to versions). Some revision control tools can be expensive, they tend to only save source ASCII text files, and they can get quite complicated to use and administrate. Mastering concepts like change logs, branches, merges, check ins, and trunks can be a daunting challenge for non-programmers and even for those technical users who just want something simple to use.

Ugh... Nope!

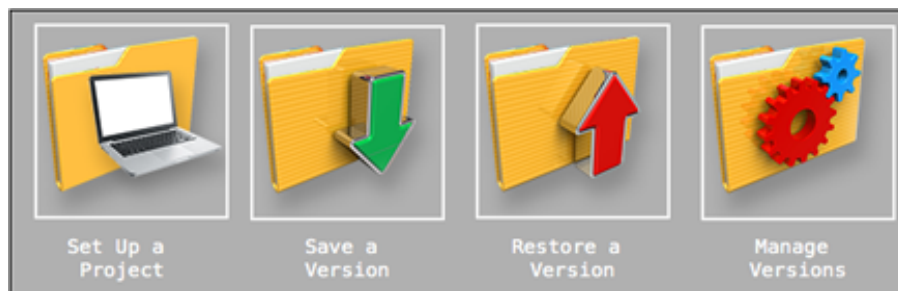
Finally, you do it yourself. When you are ready to make a version, copy all of your project folders and files to a temporary location, compress everything, and rename the compressed file with a name that describes the version. It is easy to accidentally forget to collect all of your project's files. Locating and naming these backups is anything but consistent – I know I've tried. And, finally, because you're performing these steps manually, it can take too much time, which none of us have enough of.

How Spresso works

Perhaps the easiest way to explain what Spresso does is to walk through an example ...

Pretend that you're a Web designer using Adobe Dreamweaver and you've been awarded a Web site design project from a customer as a paid engagement. To keep the work organized you'll define a hierarchy of folders and files associated with all of the components (the "project") of the site you're developing. This project will include tons of HTML, CSS, and graphics as well as documents that can be downloaded. We'll let Spresso handle the version backups for us.

Launch the Spresso app to set up your project for versioning. There are four action commands represented as buttons on the Spresso main window (and, by the way, this a screen capture from the actual app under development):



The first thing you need to do is identify your project by dragging your project's folder to the Set Up a Project button (the first button on the left). You'll be prompted to enter a project name. That is all Spresso needs to get started. At this point, you'll probably want to specify the version, date, and time

formats you'll want to use for each version. Your first project backup may be version 1.0, followed by version 1.1, and so on.

Once you're ready to deliver your Web site work to your customer, save any open files and click the Save a Version button on Spresso (the second button from the left). The version number will automatically increment and Spresso will ask you for a version description. All of your projects assets (folders and files) are then compressed into a single file that you can send to your customer.

As you continue working on your project, you can make a new version backup by clicking the Save a Version button (the second button from the left). The version number is incremented and you'll be asked to enter a description for this new version. If you add or remove files and folders, Spresso will take care of saving all of them to a version for you automatically.

What happens if your customer wants you to revert back to an earlier version?

To replace your current work with a saved version, click the Restore a Version button in Spresso (second button from the right). You'll be prompted to select one of the saved versions and your entire project (folders and files) is quickly and completely restored.

A Web site development project isn't the only type of project you can version with Spresso. It can be most anything: pictures for a wedding, software app development, logo design, construction, movie animation, and so on. There's practically no limit to what you can version with Spresso. Your customers and co-workers will most likely be impressed with how organized your projects are maintained.

Expected result and time frame

The design work is just about done, implementation has started, and I believe this is going to be a surefire hit! There are three variations of Spresso planned:

- **Spresso:Dcaaf** (expected to be available at no cost): Limited features if all you need is to maintain one active project with up to 9 versions each. Although your project can't be larger than 100 MB of total size and version backups can only be saved to your system's internal disk drive, a reviewer or customer could use Dcaaf to load one of your projects for review or editing.
- **Spresso:Americano** (expected to be sold for under \$15): Full featured versioning of your project (up to a combined 4 GB file size) can be saved to an internal or removable disk drive.
- **Spresso:Cappuccino** (expected to be sold for under \$50): Same as Americano only the combined file size can be up to 25 GB) enabling backups to major cloud repositories (like carbonite, box.net, and dropbox) as well as to your internal or removable disk drives.

Our licensing will be unique. You'll be able to install and use your licensed copy of Spresso on *all* of your personal computer systems you own (either Mac OS X or Windows). You won't be seeing that "you can't use it on more than one or two computers" error message again. WOW!

What the funding will be used for

Your funding will be used to pay for the initial development of Dcaaf and Americano as well as the promotional expenses needed to "get the word out." I've done this before without funding help, and I must admit—it wasn't easy.

If the funding limit surpasses my wildest dreams (the goal), any extra money will enable the development of the enterprise (Cappuccino) release sooner rather than later.

Appreciation to kickstarters

Thank you for helping make Spresso a reality!

BIO



Ken Whitaker of Leading Software Maniacs® (LSM) has more than twenty-five years of software development executive leadership, software development, and training experience in a variety of technology roles and industries. He has led commercial software teams at Software Publishing (remember Harvard Graphics?), Data General, embedded systems software companies, and enterprise software suppliers. Ken is an active PMI® member, Project Management Professional (PMP)® certified, and a

Certified ScrumMaster (CSM).

In addition to working with commercial software development companies, Ken has experience designing, implementing, and distributing quality software products including BreakOut-II, Visual BreakOut, and Visual Capture.

Ken has written several software development leadership books: *Managing Software Maniacs*, *Principles of Software Development Leadership*, and *I'm Not God, I'm Just a Project Manager*. Ken is also the creator of PM University, <http://www.pmuniversity.com>, and PM Chalkboard, <http://www.pmchalkboard.com>.

Ken majored in Mathematics and Fine Arts from James Madison University.

So, how did Spresso come about?

Being in software development, backups and version control systems are “part of the territory,” but when I was writing a 450 page book that included InDesign documents, specifications, notes, and graphics artwork I quickly encountered key problems:

If I wanted to transfer my backups to another system or to another operating system environment (from OS X to Windows, for example), I encountered all sorts of compatibility problems. Packaging up my material for my reviewer (editor) was time consuming and I would have to write up instructions on how to access the project's files every time. Occasionally I'd forget some of the files that I'd have to later e-mail to my editor (embarrassing).

I even tried using no cost, popular open source version control apps like git and found that it was a little too complicated to administrate and what non-programmers would need is an easy to understand git “dummies” guide. So, I started to write a book (*Version Control for Creative Professionals: Use Git to Track Your Project Assets*) to simplify version control for non-programmers. After the book exceeded 50 pages of instructions, I shelved it! No matter how you perfume a pig, it is still a pig. (No offense to pigs...)

So, now you know what led me to create an easy-to-use versioning app!

REWARDS

This table summarizes rewards to be issued with four levels of sponsorship:

Sponsor	Pledge	WEB	TU	DEC	AM	BMC	PAD	ING	STR	CAP
Friend	\$10	■	■	■						
Early Adopter	\$25	■	■	■	■	■				
Game Changer	\$100	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Innovator	\$500	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

WEB: Your name on the LSM web site as a Kickstarter benefactor

TU: Personalized thank you letter

DEC: Decaf download notification when released

AM: Americano access (your choice: Win or OS X) at beta and a licensed copy at release

BMC: LSM Bookmarks (2) and “7 Deadly Habits of Ineffective Software Managers” comix

PAD: LSM ultrathin mousepad

ING: “I’m Not God, I’m Just a Project Manager” eBook (Kindle and PDF format)

STR: Strategic mentoring role assisting with prioritizing the next Spresso’s feature set