

Copernic Desktop Search 1.5 (Beta)

It was interesting to read in the August 2005 edition of PC Pro magazine a comparison of four programs that can index files on our PC computers.

For some time now I have used Copernic Desktop Search version 1.5 (Beta). It can be quite difficult sometimes to remember where a particular file is located; Copernic Desktop Search (CDS) has saved my bacon on many occasions. After installing this free program the user needs to set up certain parameters within the program. These include when you want the program to update its indices and if necessary the drives to index. It is possible for the user to include additional files to be indexed; such files for me include the image files from the digital camera that I use **.x3f**. It could be that users have other specific programs which generate other non-standard file types, these can be added to the indexing facility.

Once set up the program needs to index the files in the locations specified, this is probably best set to run when the computer is not going to be used, the program is intelligent enough to stop the indexing when use is being made of the computer and to resume when either mouse or keyboard are not used for a period of five seconds. Having said that, it is possible to set up the program to carry out the indexing whilst the computer is being used.



Initially it may take several hours for the indexing to be completed.

I currently have over 127,000 data files which are indexed and the index files themselves total over 200 MB. You may wonder why they occupy this amount of space; the reason is that the program indexes all words in all documents. File types indexed by default, have a look at the Copernic FAQ here:

www.copernic.com/en/products/desktop-search/faq.html.

How to use the program

There are two configurations in which the program can be set up to run, from a desktop bar if configured or by clicking on the icon located in the system tray. The interface, shown below, is what will be presented to the user when initiating a search.

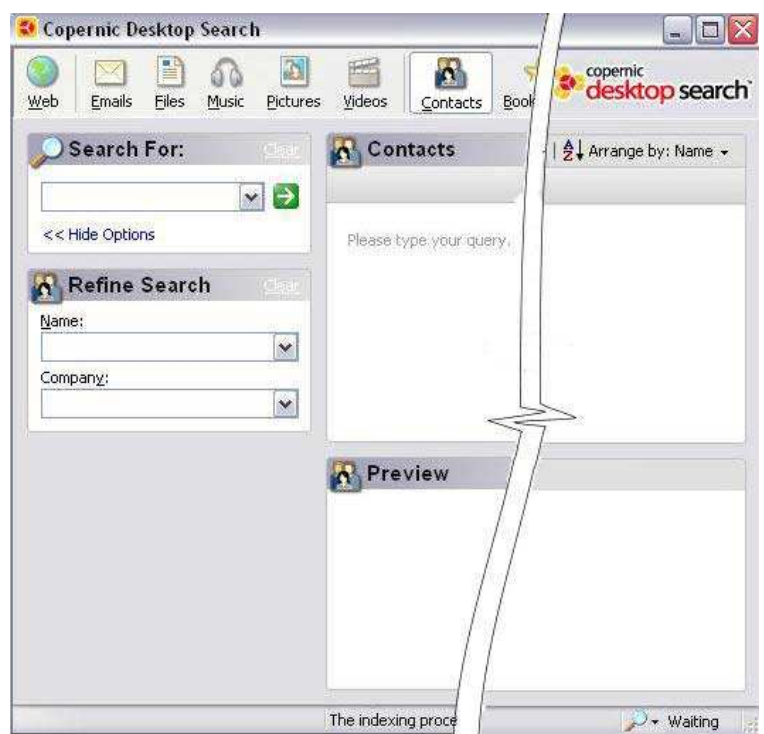
First a search category needs to be selected from, Web, Emails, Files, Music, Pictures, Videos, Contacts, Bookmarks and History.

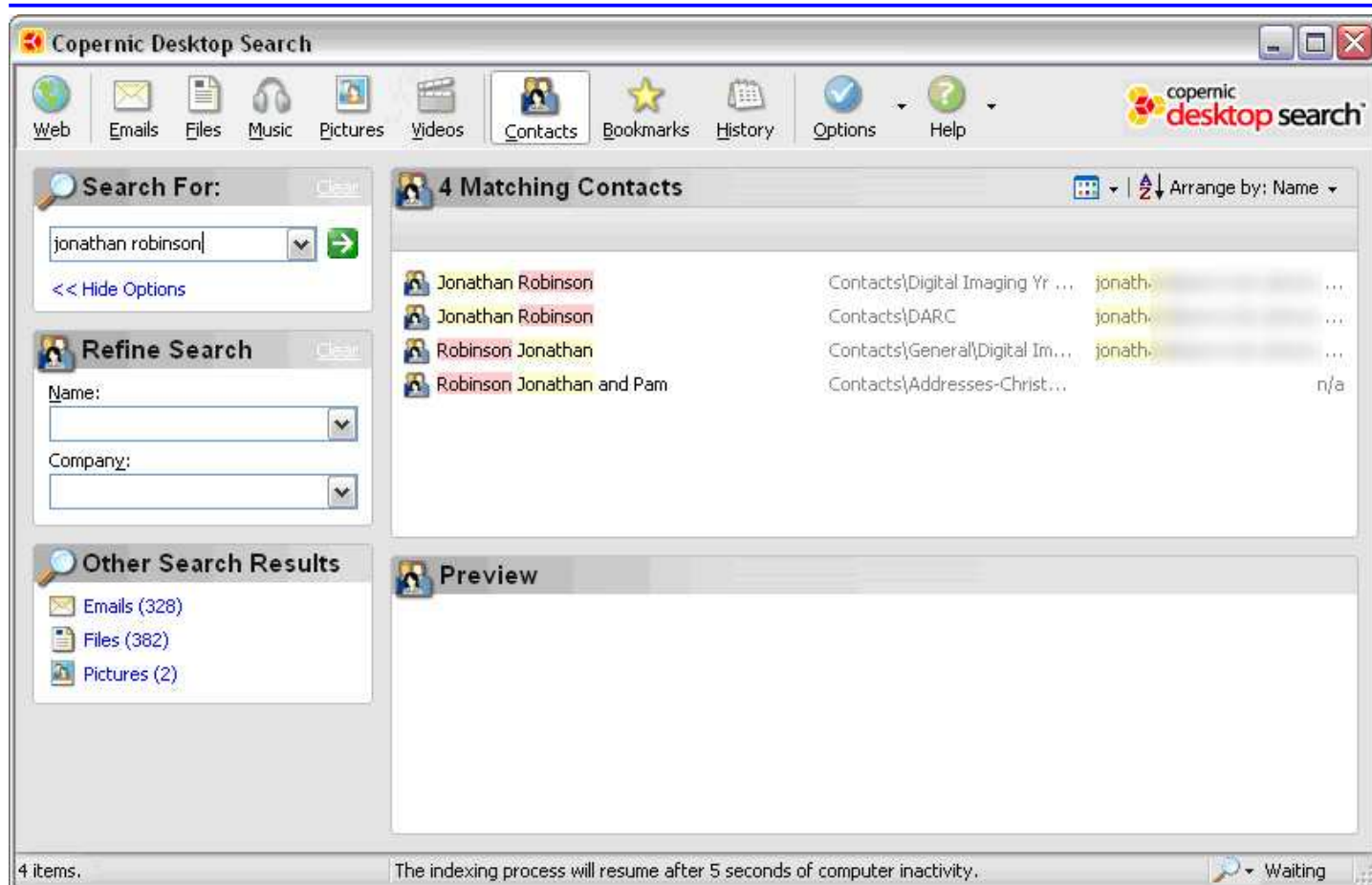
If Contacts is selected as the search category and I enter “jonathan robinson” as the search string, the window shown below is what is presented to me in a fraction of a second. As well as the contact details it also shows at the bottom left in “Other Search Results”, that there are 328 e-mails, 382 files and 2 pictures that are also indexed and contain the search string.

If you cannot remember the name of a file you may be able to remember some of the text contained within it, type that into the “Search For:” box and usually the result is presented in a fraction of a second.

Searches can be refined further too, depending on file type. It is also possible to search within the EXIF metadata of JPEG images - a depth of search that simply does not exist in other desktop search programs.

I quote this from the PC Pro article: “When switching between search categories, the results appear instantly, because Copernic has already pre-fetched them. If you’re in any doubt as to the power of the Copernic pedigree, both Boolean operators and





nested searches within parenthesis are supported and new and updated content is indexed on-the-fly for near instant results. The ability to index emails as they appear in your inbox is currently limited to Outlook only, though.”

Within the program there is support for the Mozilla Thunderbird e-mail client (as well as Outlook and Eudora), including indexing of e-mails, attachments and contact data, along with support for Firefox bookmarks and cache. Network drives can also be indexed.

The integrated file viewer possesses an embedded player for both audio and video files, filmstrip image viewing and a dedicated Contacts viewing pane. In use the program proves to be very accurate and is fast. PDF files (minus images) appear in seconds. Colour coded keywords are highlighted and the ability to jump to the next highlighted occurrence with one click is very good too.

The verdicts on the three other desktop search programs from the PC Pro article were as follows:

Blinkz 3 (Beta): Smart folders and video indexing can't save an otherwise distinctly average performer.

Google Desktop Search: no integrated file viewer and poor filtering leave this program struggling.

Windows Desktop Search: do not let the fluffy branding fool you; WDS is a powerful and flexible desktop search tool.

Copernic Desktop Search: Copernic's years of experience show through with this desktop search client.

<http://www.copernic.com/>

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