

# FlexOS™ 286 Release 1.42

## Update Kit

Dear FlexOS Developer,

This package contains the FlexOS 286 Release 1.42 update disks and documentation. The Update Kit consists of:

### For the FlexOS Programmer's Toolkit owner:

- **New set of diskettes:** The diskettes enclosed provide the entire system, tools, and utilities for FlexOS application development.
- **Replacement documentation:** We've modularized the FlexOS user documentation to make it easier to use, modify, and distribute. The new user set consists of

Installation Guide: How to install FlexOS

Configuration Guide: How to configure the user-modifiable parameters

User's Guide: Introduction to FlexOS use

User's Reference Guide: Command descriptions

Window Manager Guide: How to use the sample window manager

DR EDIX User's Guide: How to use the FlexOS editor

- **Release Notes:** This document explains the new and changed features in this release and how to update your documentation to incorporate these changes.
- **Literature:** Fact sheets and an order form are enclosed to summarize FlexOS 186 and FlexOS 386 features and explain the FlexOS packaging options.

### For the FlexOS System Builder's Kit owner:

The Update Kit provides the pieces in the Programmer's Toolkit plus five additional diskettes with the system object modules, driver and modifiable utility sources, and a stand-alone debugger. Note that the kit no longer contains duplicate copies of the system object modules--one as the OBJ file and the other in the system library. To avoid confusion, the system object modules are provided in the library alone.

### For the OEM Redistribution Kit owner:

This update package consists of a set of disks with the new system and utilities. Note that the OEM Redistribution Kit now supplies only the files you are licensed to distribute. The kit no longer includes, for example, the FlexOS tools and MetaWare™ compiler.

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## **For the Machine Readable Source Kit owner:**

This update package contains replacement code for those parts of FlexOS for which you have purchased source code rights.

### **New in Release 1.42**

Some of the new or changed features you'll find in this release are:

- **Developer Kit Name Change:** What once were the FlexOS Developer Kit and Developer Kit Supplement are now the Programmer's Toolkit and System Builder's Kit, respectively. The kits contents are basically the same; see the enclosed for a breakdown of the two kits' contents.
- **Improved hard disk performance, more drive types supported:** We incorporated the changes made to the hard disk driver for FlexOS 386 into the FlexOS 286 driver and restructured it a bit. (For driver writers: we moved more of the disk interrupt servicing into the ISR.) The result: FlexOS 286 runs on a wider variety of machines, including 80386-based computers, and disk I/O is faster.

**Important:** The new hard disk driver is named simply HD.DRV. The hard disk driver in previous releases of FlexOS has been named ATHD.DRV.

- **New FDISK:** We rewrote FDISK for the new hard disk driver. The new version is compatible with the old but offers some new functions. See the new Configuration Guide for the FDISK description.
- **Door-open detection for floppy disk drives:** The file system now detects when the floppy disk door has been opened. See the Release Notes for a description of this new feature.
- **Debug disk (System Builder's Kit only):** FlexOS 286 now includes a stand-alone debugger with an executable version of FlexOS. Use this disk to debug drivers. You can also generate your own executable version of FlexOS to run with the debugger. See the README file on the debug disk for the explanation of how to use it.
- **Bug fixes:** FlexOS 286 reliability is improved from two sources: FlexOS 386 development since the FlexOS 286 1.31 release and our focused effort on fixing bugs in this release. The summary of work done for this release was mailed to you last week. If you did not get a copy call your Digital Research Sales Office or Digital Research Technical Services at (408) 646-6464.
- **Linker Update:** The FlexOS linker provided in the Update Kit has two features to make it more useful: it returns an success/error code for more efficient use in batch files, and it separates STDERR and STDOUT so that you can redirect these to different places. In

addition, the linker makes the use of shared run-time libraries (SRTLs) easier. See the Release Notes for an explanation of the new linker features.

- **New documentation:** As mentioned above, we've modularized the user documentation to make it easier to use, modify and distribute.

### **How to Proceed**

The diskette set provided includes the complete replacement files for the kit you originally purchased (e.g., Programmer's Toolkit, System Builder's Kit, OEM Redistribution Kit, or Machine Readable Source). See the Installation Instructions for the description of the installation options and how to implement them. Note that if you want to boot FlexOS from the hard disk, the new system requires the bootloader provided in the 1.42 release. Also note that there's a new installation option: loading FlexOS from DOS with the LOADFLEX program.

Be sure to save your configuration files such as CONFIG.BAT, AUTOEXEC.BAT, and USER.TAB so that they aren't overwritten. In addition, system developers and integrators should consider the impact the new system will have on CONFIG.C and associated files. Finally, keep in mind that the hard disk driver name has changed from ATHD to HD.

### **Digital Research Commitment**

We're pleased with the progress we've made with FlexOS since its introduction in 1985 and hope it has filled your needs. We're not resting here though. Watch over the next months for exciting announcements on new FlexOS graphics and network options to help you build better solutions. If you have any questions regarding FlexOS 286 Release 1.42 or other FlexOS products or plans, please call or write. Address your questions to

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Sincerely,

Digital Research Inc.