

# Simple “How To” Helper

Choosing solutions to fit requirements

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John Nash  
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# The task

- “How To” information for diverse issues and tasks in a particular environment needs to be assembled and made available
- Much of the information is in the form of forum printouts, text notes, or links to websites or videos
- Who will collect, prepare and use the information is important

# Typical item

- Android tablet launches WhatsApp with blank screen and no (apparent) way to get to chats.
- Web “advice” suggests clearing cache, or app data, or reinstalling. Did all these multiple times and they “worked” for < 1 day each.
- Then found web post where author suggested rotating screen from portrait to landscape. (!!!@###???\*\*\*!!!!)  
[https://www.reddit.com/r/whatsapp/comments/1ulfdak/android\\_app\\_starts\\_blank\\_with\\_large\\_screen\\_zoom/](https://www.reddit.com/r/whatsapp/comments/1ulfdak/android_app_starts_blank_with_large_screen_zoom/)
- Apparently issue of inappropriate zoom setting, but this simple fix does work.

# Possible ways to present “How To”

- Wiki
- Static website
- Directory of files with appropriate names

Let us consider utility / cost of each of these.

# Wiki approach

- What software to use?
- Server needs?
- Offline access?
- Who does the setup / maintenance?

# Static web pages

- Can be accessed locally
- How to prepare?
  - Tools
  - Processes
- Who does the work?

# Directory of files

- Can use files of different types
- Simplicity an advantage, ... but
- Importance of structure and naming
  - Of directories to subdivide the items
  - Of files to allow for find by search

# My local situation

- 2 people – only one will build special files, but both can rename and move files.
  - 1 tower and 1 laptop each; Synology NAS, some other machines (2 set-top R-Pi's, music player, cracked screen “spare”, document camera obsolete PC)
- Only one person will do much in way of CLI work and “fiddle”
- Have reasonably standard machine setup protocol
  - Particular use of DoubleCommander and iconized custom commands

# Static web pages

Hugo:

- Straightforward setup (thanks Scott!)
- Fairly easy to use
- But each page needs preparation (only 1 of us)

Jekyll: Looked at docs and decided too messy

Publii: local generation of “posts”, but then wants a place to “publish”. Seems blog-focussed.

# Static web pages 2

Zola: single binary, static site generator

- Managed to try it, but could see work to make things tidy

Plenty of SSGs. All require some level of learning which one party will not do.

# Wiki

Dokuwiki: Nice, but must create pages and links

- Needs server and PHP

Other wikis mostly same issues.

Zim: (thanks Tug!)

- Local files
- Fairly simple structure / plain text, but still need to prepare, especially *tree* structure

# tree

```
Home
├── AndroidPhoneTablet.txt
├── AudioStuff
│   ├── batchmp32wav
│   └── command_line_-_How_to_make_a_playlist_f...a_directory_of_mp3_fil-
job_722.pdf
│   ├── flac2mp3
│   ├── mlame
│   └── mp4tomp3
├── AudioStuff.txt
├── Backup
│   ├── bu2CAV
│   ├── bu2CAV-exclude
│   └── ncf-webbackup201504.txt
├── Backup.txt
├── Email
│   └── Accessing_Zimbra_Collaboration_Server_with_Thunderbird_-_Zimbra_-
job_88.pdf
└── Email.txt
```

# Can this be used?

- Be nice to generate HTML
  - Then discovered ‘tree -H’ and other features
- *Le mieux est l'ennemi du bien*
  - Want to have “latest” set of items
  - Nice if it can be “click to see”
  - How to update?

# Currency of “How To”

- Keep definitive set of files (“path tree”) on NAS
- Script to download files, generate HTML and display. -- ***vhowto***
  - Have not yet controlled for “unable to download”
- Add icon to command-icon bar in Double Commander **?**

# Updating

- Script ***updatehowto***
- Gets latest collection, then opens Double Commander to allow for cleanup
- Use 'rsync –delete' to push back to NAS

# Discussion

- Extreme simplicity
- #2 person will create/edit files (but #1 person likely will maintain the path tree)
- Iconized command saves having to remember the command name
- “Solution” is driven by human needs rather than software elegance