

PLATO Files

One of the biggest challenges for the hobbyist working with PLATO Files is working with/around the variety of containers in which they live.

This project and related collection of articles encapsulates these containers to enable Input/Output/Conversion across all target containers.

Tape files still remain a convenient mode of file exchange and their manipulation has been enabled by functionality provided by other projects. The latest project [TapeBrowse Utility \(beta\)](#) has significant tape manipulation/transformation/validation functionality and continues to be maintained as a complement to this project's objectives.

Note

Although Cybis is the generally available offshoot for hobbyists, when referring to the files, filesystems and the system in these articles, the name of the original system **PLATO** will be used.

Although PLATO files have a variety of types (e.g. *TUTOR*, *COMPASS*, *DATASET*, *NAMESET*, etc.), more specific language will be used in the articles discussing their contents.

Overview

Manipulating PLATO files is complicated by the fact that they may be contained in containers of varying types. The general structures are consistent for all hobbyist releases of PLATO/Cybis. The project's objectives include the ability to perform the following actions:

- Read PLATO files from whatever container upon which they reside
 - Known Containers are:
 - PLATO Packs
 - NOS2 Masterfiles
 - Hostfile "Pack" structures
- Write PLATO files onto any container
- Analyze Internal Structures
- Modify Key Internal Structures
- "Print" formatted contents of
 - PLATO files
 - Containers

This work was started in a variety of forms but nothing stable remained to enable the hobbyist to maintain these structures using contemporary tools such as source control systems.

PLATO Files

PLATO Files are structures containing different types of data. There are approximately 35 Known types of data to-date and their internal structures vary, but all files are stored in increments of

“parts”. A *part* is a subdivision of a disk space.

[More about PLATO Files and their structure](#)

PLATO Packs

PLATO V file containers are the root structure after which all other containers are modeled (roughly speaking).

[More about PLATO Packs](#)

NOS2 Packs

NOS2 files are simply containers for the PLATO Packs. Each NOS2 disk may contain one or more PLATO Masterfiles. The internal structure of the Masterfile is roughly the equivalent of the PLATO Pack.

[More about NOS2 Packs and PLATO Masterfiles](#)

Hostfile "Packs"

Hostfile “Packs” are a contemporary filesystem container model using the host directory tree structure as a container for PLATO files themselves.

As such, there are some structures which must be maintained in some fundamentally different ways than the predecessor structures.

[More about Hostfile Packs](#)

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