

Product Review by Chuck Reisz, October 27, 2001

Drive Image 5.0

From: PowerQuest Corporation

List Price: \$69.95. Price at egghead.com \$58.99 on October 26, 2001.

Drive Image 5.0 can be purchased thru Computer Stores and at some Office supply stores.

(Also, see user group order info at end of this review)

Drive Image 5.0 can be used for backing up Hard drives to a Hard Drive Image or to select removable media files such as Zip files. Capability is provided to restore a complete disk or any files or images within the saved disk image. Drive Image 5.0 also can be used in upgrading to a new system or new disk.

Requirements:

Processor:	Intel Pentium compatible or higher
RAM:	16 MB (32 MB for FAT32 or Hard drives larger than 4GB)
Hard Disk Space:	16.5 MB
Operating System:	Windows 95, 98, NT 4.0 Workstation, Windows Me, Windows 2000 Professional, Windows XP or DOS (5.0 or later)
3.5" disk and CD-ROM:	Any speed
Video Support:	VGA or Higher

Installation:

I installed Drive Image 5.0 on my laptop that came with Drive Image Special Edition when purchased. The installation does not overwrite previous editions of Drive Image including DISE. This was as spelled out in the user guide. The installation was smooth and did not cause any surprises. Drive Image 5.0 does have an uninstall program, which I have not tested. I did run into problems uninstalling Drive Image Special Edition apparently because I had upgraded the operating system from the Original Windows 98 to Windows Me. I will be following up on this with PowerQuest.

Features: Drive Image 5.0 provides capability to create hard drive images and when needed to restore the hard image to the state that existed at the time the backup image was created. It also provides the ability to restore a single image or a file at any level and all of its contents. New with Version 5.0 are the following:

1. QuickImage, which is a new Windows, interface which provides an option to the DOS Interface.
2. QuickImage scheduler that allows for scheduling regular backups of Disk Drives or partitions. The scheduled backups will then occur as scheduled without manual intervention.
3. Support for backing up directly to specified CD-RW drives including IDE, SCSI and PCMCIA. USB and Firewall drives are not supported at this time.
4. Supports disk drives up to 80 GB as well.
5. Support for most common file systems such as FAT, FAT32 etc.

6. VF Editor that allows you to custom-build your own Virtual Floppy Files, removing the need to create and boot from floppy diskettes.
7. Version 5.0 adds support for Windows XP

The primary purpose of this program for my purposes at this time is to provide a reliable backup to my Hard Drive. It was recommended that file maintenance including disk scan and defrag be run before creating the disk image. I performed the suggested maintenance and created a drive image using the QuickImage system. The first operation the first time thru is to create a QuickImage Definition that simply defines what drives or partitions are to be backed up. The definitions are saved for future use and do not need to be defined each time the program is used. There is an option on compression and I selected the highest level of compression. The operation went smooth. QuickImage can now be used to restore the disk or partition that has been saved. The compression I achieved resulted in a space reduction of about 1/3 vs. their estimated 50% reduction. I think this is due to the 1200 photos I have on my hard disk in jpg format. In jpg format they are already compressed.

The Drive Image 5.0 package includes PowerQuest's ImageExplorer program that allows the restoration of a single image or of a file and all of its contents as an alternative to the restoration of a complete disk or partition. I did use this program and found it very easy to understand and use.

The system has a number of features and programs that I have yet to utilize. One advanced option that I intend to try in the near future is to create a drive image and use the option "Split Image File Into Multiple Files". This feature will force QuickImage to split the image created into multiple images that are smaller than the size to be specified. It is my understanding that the multiple images can then be copied to a specified media such as CD's for off site storage.

Also included in the Drive Image 5.0 package is PowerQuest's DataKeeper program that provides for backup of individual records for quick easy recovery of those individual files. The User Guide states that DataKeeper is not supported under Windows XP.

The box states that Drive Image 5.0. "Maintains its position as the premier disk imaging utility for the *proficient PC User*". My experience is that the basic backup and retrieval capabilities can be relatively easily understood and implemented using the QuickImage and the ImageExplorer programs. To fully understand and use all of the capabilities of this system does require a higher level of proficiency. Or looking at it another way, understanding and using the full capabilities of this system will make a person a more proficient PC user. I have a ways to go in this regard but plan on expanding my use of the capabilities provided.

The system comes with a printed Users Guide as well as PDF Manuals, which are loaded onto the computer during installation. The PDF Manuals are searchable by Adobe Acrobat. I found the Users Guide a little hard to follow in a few places. I think it may be directed toward the "proficient PC User" mentioned on the box. There is also a handy Quick Reference Guide that I will probably use the first few times I back up the system or restore files from the backup image. I believe that the Windows interface is probably a large step forward in making the system more easily understood and used by the less proficient user such as myself.

Product Support is available to registered users of Drive Image until six months after the release of the next version. Users are urged to use the manuals and online help systems before placing a call to technical support. Upon registration, PowerQuest provides 30 days of complimentary service from the day of the first call. I have not called on Technical Support for assistance.

My initial impression of Drive Image is such that I am giving consideration to purchasing a second copy for installation on my desktop system.

Power Quest offers their products, including Drive Image 5.0 to user group members at special prices. Drive Image V5 and Partition Magic V7 list for \$69.95 each. They are available at a user group price for \$35.00 each. DriveCopy V4, which has a list of \$49.95, is available for \$25.00. I previously purchased Partition Magic V6 thru this user group service and got prompt delivery. There are usually order forms available at the PPCUG meetings on the “free” table or you can order online at www.ugr.com/order/. When placing an order the Special User Group Price Code is UGVAL01. Be sure to list Plateau PC Users Group with your purchase information.