

Jolt Awards: The Best Programming Utilities

The Jolt Judges, July 29, 2013 The top utilities that solve annoying development problems.

Jolt Productivity Award: [Araxis Merge](#)

In a world where there are dozens of free diff and merge tools, a product would have to be pretty special to charge for this capability. Predictably, [Araxis Merge](#) is an excellent comparison and merge tool. It has a rich set of features, yet manages to maintain a clean and uncluttered user interface.

Most notable among its features are the ability to do folder/directory comparison and synchronization in a nice collapsible tree view. You can then drill down and compare text files, binary files, document formats, and even image files. The text file comparison is the most common, of course. It works with various line endings and encodings.

You get to decide what counts as a difference (line endings, whitespace, etc). Araxis also supports two-way and three-way merge with a very convenient two- or three-pane window. I have mostly used Araxis Merge on Windows, but it has a very slick Mac OS X version as well.

Araxis Merge also integrates with many IDEs and version-control systems, so you don't have to step out of your main tool just to do a file comparison or merge, or you can use it in standalone mode.

— Gigi Sayfan

