PC2Flop and Flop2PC (for Vector Graphic 8” Controller)

PC2Flop writes a soft-sectored 8" floppy with a disk image transmitted from a PC. The image is transmitted through a Bitstreamer II or ZCB serial port using the XMODEM protocol. Flop2PC does the opposite and transmits an image of a soft-sectored 8" floppy to a PC. The programs support the Vector Graphic DSDD and SSSD formats as well as the IBM SSSD format.

These programs talk directly to the Vector Graphic 8” controller and do not require CP/M or an OS to function. Since this is a soft sectored controller, PC2Flop requires the destination disk to have been formatted at some point. To allow PC2Flop to create a new disk for a "cold" machine, it offers a format disk option.

These programs run standalone at 0100h or under CP/M. Any type of disk can be read or written even if running under CP/M. Disk images are available on the deramp.com website where this file was found.

Standalone operation may be required to create a bootable disk (e.g., CP/M) when no other bootable disk is available. Use the monitor’s P (program) command to type in the hex bytes of the program listed in LOADER.PRN. Execute the loader by running from zero (G 0000). Send the program PC2FLOP.COM through port B on the Bitstreamer II (port A on the ZCB). After transmission is complete, reset the computer and run PC2FLOP at address 100h by typing G 0100.

As an alternative, an Intel hex loader ROM at EC00 (the printer ROM location) is available as HEXLOAD.HEX in the “ROMs” directory for Vector Graphic .

Because the DSDD disks are 1 mb in length and this can take a while to transfer, Flop2PC can be instructed to detect multiple consecutive tracks of nothing but E5’s and terminate the disk transfer. On a CP/M disk, this typically means there are no more data files on the disk and the remainder of the disk is nothing but E5’s. Conversely, a partial image file can be written to disk (PC2Flop) and the remainder of the disk will not be modified. A newly formatted disk will have E5’s in the unwritten portion of the disk.

When Flop2PC encounters a read error, several retries are performed including stepping out and back in to the original track, and stepping in and back out to the original track. If the read still fails, the error is noted and the copy process continues so that the remainder of the disk can still be recovered.