How can I add a new folder to my system path?

A. The system path is a list of folders, separated by a semicolon, that identifies the folders that the system should search when looking for files that are called from the Run dialog box, command line, or other processes. Normal program installation changes this path to include the program's installation path.

To change the system path, perform these steps:

1. Start the System Control Panel applet (Start - Settings - Control Panel - System).
2. Select the Advanced tab.
3. Click the Environment Variables button.
4. Under System Variables, select Path, then click Edit.
5. You'll see a list of folders, as this example for my system shows: C:\Program Files\Windows Resource Kits\Tools\;%SystemRoot%\system32;%SystemRoot%;%SystemRoot%\System32\ Files\Support Tools\;C:\Program Files\Common Files\Roxio Shared\DLLShared;C:\Program Files\Common Files\Ulead Systems\MPEG;C:\Program Files\Intel\DMIX;C:\Program Files\Executive Software\Diskeeper\;C:\Program Files\Bonjour\;C:\Program Files\QuickTime\QTSystem\;C:\Program Files\Misc
6. You can add additional folders that you want to include in searches. I add a "C:\program files\misc" entry into which I place my standalone utilities, instead of copying them into C:\windows. Click OK.
7. You'll need to restart the processes (e.g., command prompt) that use the system path to see the added folders.

An alternative to setting the path at system level is to change it at user level; however, doing so will affect only your logon session and not other users who might use the computer or system processes, which might cause confusion and unexpected behavior. You can also set the path at a system level by using the setx command with the -m switch.