

MCXPrefs

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REVISION HISTORY

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Chapter 1

MCXPrefs

1.1 As good as it gets

MCXPrefs 2.0 - MUI Prefs for MultiCX 2.80
An application by Micro Design

MUI U-turn?!

Requirements
Setting up

Overview
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Angel list
New in 2.1

"Smile, it's freeware."

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"There are two ways of constructing a software design: One way is to make it so simple that there are obviously no deficiencies, and the other way is to make it so complicated that there are no obvious deficiencies. The first method is far more difficult"

-C.A.R. Hoare

1.2 Micro Design and MUI

Micro Design and MUI

We actually very publicly hated MUI up until this project, which is why a few words might be in order to explain this U-turn in our attitude...

Coding MCXPrefs 1.2 made us realise that gadtools, fine as it may once have been in the OS 1.3 Topaz days, is piss-poor as a modern GUI engine for a complex application like MCXPrefs. It looked horrible, despite our best efforts, it was a bitch to code and a nightmare to maintain.

For MCXPrefs 2.0, we decided to use a third party GUI generator, and we settled on BGUI. Bad choice :-). With the GUI only half coded BGUI was taking almost 10 seconds to build, it crashed, it was bugged, and worst of all the development was stalled. Obviously we needed to re-think our plans. We could have waited for Reaction, but it didn't look like it had the right stuff anyway. What we needed was flexibility and power to bring user-friendliness to our big complex GUI. What we needed turned out to be MUI.

Ain't that just Life?

1.3 Requirements

Requirements

MCXPrefs needs:

- o OS 2.0+
- o MultiCX 2.80
- o MUI Release 3.8
- o WBStart-Handler or OS 3.5

But benefits from:

- o OS 3.5 (WBStart-Handler not required)
- o AmigaGuide.library v34+
- o the help guides present

1.4 Setting up

Setting up

Installation

Use the installer! It always checks versions, verifies its actions, accepts pretend installation and back tracing. If you want to install manually, copy the WBStart-Handler from the "L" drawer to "SYS:L" and the mcxprefs.guide from "English" or "Deutsch" into the "HELP:English"

or "HELP:Deutsch" drawer.

ToolTypes

MCX_LOCATION=<pathname> ...full path and name of the version of MultiCX you want to read from & save to. When nil or incorrect a file requester will pop up. This is set during installation if you use the installer.

Configuring MultiCX

MCXPrefs can run perfectly well independently of MultiCX, but it can also be tied into it by editing the MultiCX ToolType EXTPREFS to read:

```
"EXTPREFS=Run >NIL: SYS:Prefs/MCXPrefs" ...or your own MCXPrefs path
```

Now when you ask a commodity handler such as the Exchange program to show the MultiCX interface, MultiCX will pop up MCXPrefs instead of the WB info requester. You can also configure MCX's CX_POPKEY ToolType and have MCXPrefs running from hotkey. Both of these settings can be specified through MCXPrefs from the MultiCX/Settings menu.

1.5 Overview

Overview

Save/Use/Cancel

The Save gadget will close the prefs and save the settings to the copy of MultiCX you have specified in the MCX_LOCATION. Use causes a copy of MultiCX to be made to T:MCXPrefsUse from MCX_LOCATION and the current settings to be saved to it. This allows temporary changes to be made to MultiCX. Cancel will close the prefs without making changes to MultiCX.

Important Menu Items

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Edit - Reset To Defaults | Puts everything back to default values, 0 or Off for most features. |
| Edit - Last Saved | Works in the same way as in all Workbench preferences - i.e discards any changes made to the settings and restores the last saved settings. |
| Edit - Restore | Again, works the same as other preferences - i.e discards any changes and restores the settings previously in use. |
| Settings - MultiCX... | Opens a sub-window with gadgets to control the commodity ToolTypes of MCX: CX_POPKEY and CX_PRIORITY, also the MultiCX specific EXTPREFS that allows a choice of external prefs program - but why use anything except MCXPrefs? |
-

Settings - MultiCX: Not to be confused with the above feature, this will toggle the active/inactive state of MultiCX, if it's in the commodity list at runtime.

1.6 Online help

Online help

While you're using MCXPrefs, if you see a feature you want more details on, just press the HELP key with the mouse pointer inside the frame of the feature you need help with and an AmigaGuide page will open with a full description. You can call the contents by simply pressing HELP without the mouse pointer inside a frame N.B: Force German and Ignore Class require you to put the mouse pointer directly over the checkbox.

The sections of the MultiCX guide present in the help guide described above have been reproduced with the kind permission of Martin Berndt.

Navigation

When a feature page is open, browsing cycles through the other features in the current category and the contents button links to the contents page. So if, for example, the feature page for Screen Blanker was open, only other features in the System category could be got to by browsing.

1.7 Legalities

Legalities

The name "Micro Design" is a collective alter-ego of authors Richard West and Daniel Pimley. The software referred to in this documentation as "MCXPrefs" is Copyright © 1998-2000 Richard West and Daniel Pimley.

MCXPrefs is FREeware
MCXPrefs is a MUI application

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MUI Copyright © 1992-97 Stefan Stuntz

1.8 Angel list

Angel list

Micro Design consider the following people (in no particular order) to be angels. You are all going straight to Heaven:

Coffee/Alcohol - For just being there. :-)

Martin Berndt - For his support, for allowing us to reproduce various sections of his MultiCX docs in the MCXPrefs online help, and of course for MultiCX, best commodity ever!

Carl Drougge - For replying to the GetRGB32() query we posted to the AmigaE mailing list, letting us make the (now obsolete) FORCE ToolType return altered colours to their old RGB.

Menno Tjoelker - For helping us with the query we posted to the AmigaE mailing list on how to use commodity broker commands.

Nils Goers - For providing us with complete German translations of the help and our German catalog AND reporting an enforcer hit MCXPrefs 1.2 produced. Wow!

Steve Wroldsen - Our one and only registration throughout MCXPrefs' distant shareware days! Steve is a God in our eyes.

West Family - For tolerating Daniel virtually living in their house on every Friday night during the many months MCXPrefs took to code, and every Friday since come to think of it. :-)

1.9 Appliance of science

Appliance of science

- o MUI interface
 - o Locale support
 - o German help and catalog
 - o Memory leak plugged
 - o OS 3.5 icons
 - o Bug fixes and optimization
- New in 2.1
- o Extra OS 3.5 functionality
-

- o More bug fixes :-)
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