About Launch!

Launch! is a fully configurable, tool-box style Windows application.

On the Launch! screen, there are several buttons.   After assigning a program to one of the buttons, Launch! will extract that program's icon and use it as a picture on the button.

The program can then be activated by clicking on the corresponding button on Launch!

Launch! remembers its configuration and automatically restores it when you run Launch! the next time.

Disclaimer:

By installing this program on your system, you indicate your agreement to the following terms and conditions.   If you do NOT agree, you are not licensed to use this program and must delete it from your sytem.

THE PROGRAM **LAUNCH!.EXE** AND THE HELP FILE **LAUNCH!.HLP** ARE DISTRIBUTED "AS IS." THE AUTHOR DOES NOT MAKE ANY WARRANTY OF ANY KIND, EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED.   IN NO EVENT SHALL THE AUTHOR BE LIABLE FOR ANY DAMAGES INCLUDING (BUT NOT LIMITED TO) LOST PROFITS, LOST SAVINGS, OR ANY OTHER INCIDENTAL OR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES RESULTING FROM THE USE OR INABILITY TO USE THIS PROGRAM, EVEN IF THE AUTHOR HAS BEEN ADVISED OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGES, OR FOR ANY CLAIM BY ANY OTHER PARTY.

Configuring the Buttons

There are two ways to configure an unconfigured button.   The first method is to just click on the button you wish to configure.   (Or you may right-click on the button and select "Edit..." from the popup menu.)

A screen will then come up where you define the program that will run when you press the button on Launch!   You can either type the name of the program into the "Program" field, or press "Browse..." and pick the program from the dialog box.   The file name you specify in the "Program" field MUST have the extension EXE, COM, PIF, or BAT.
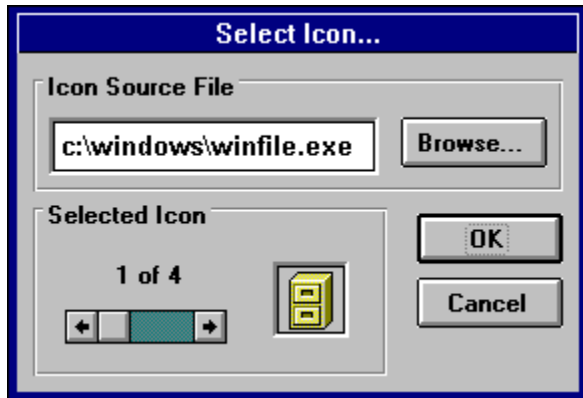
The "Parameters", "Working Directory", and "Description" fields are optional.   Their functions are identical to the Parameters and Working Directory fields located in the Properties of an icon in Program Manager. (In Launch!, the Working Directory will default to the location of the program in the Program field.)   If you supply a description, it will be placed in the status bar instead of what's in the "Program" field.   (The status bar is only visible if "Status Bar" is checked on the General Options screen.)

The following figure shows a sample configuration:

Launch!, by default, extracts the first icon found in the program to use as the picture on the button.   (If you specified a DOS program, it uses the MS-DOS icon found in PROGMAN.EXE.   All PIF's will default to this MS-DOS icon as well.)   If you want to use one of the other icons in the program, or an icon from a different icon source all together, click on the button "Select Icon...".   You can then specify the name of the icon source either by typing it directly into the "Icon Source File" field, or by pressing "Browse..." and selecting it from the dialog box.   After you specify a new icon source, click on the horizontal scroll bar located inside the "Selected Icon" frame.   If there is more than one icon in the icon source file, you can scroll through them all and pick the one you want.   Press "OK" when you're satisfied, or press "Cancel" to forget about the changes you made to the selected icon.

The following figure is an example "Select Icon" screen:

When you're done configuring the button, press "OK" to go back to Launch!, or press "Cancel" to abort the configuration of the button.
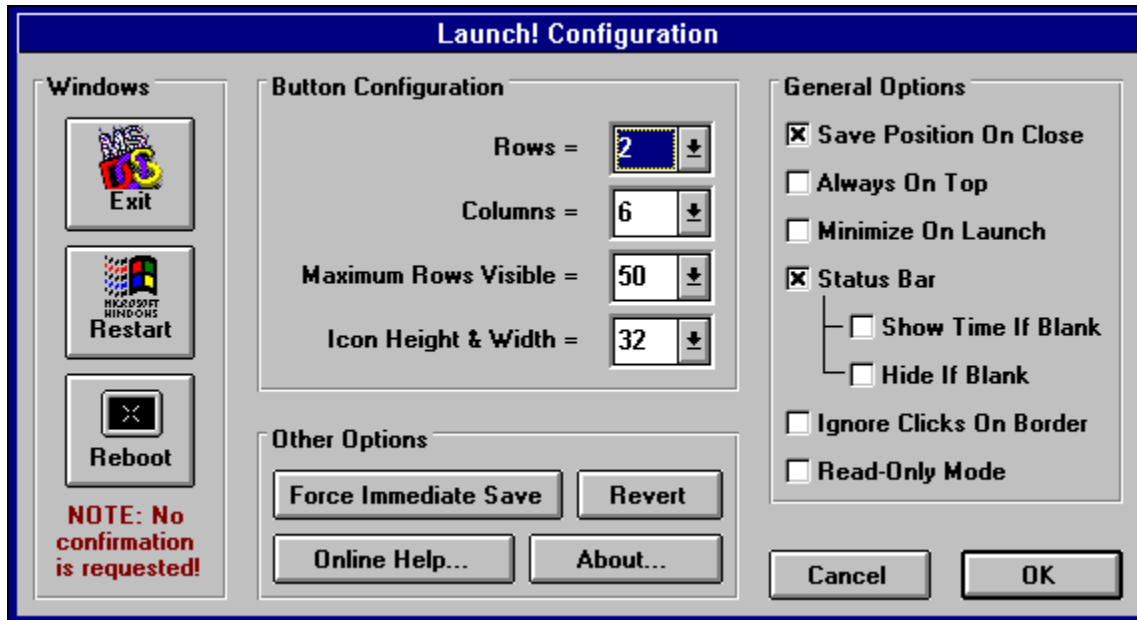
Another way to configure the button on Launch!, is to drag the program from File Manager and drop it on the button you wish to configure.   This method is much faster and easier.   Launch! will use the first icon in the program if it's a Windows program, and will use the MS-DOS icon found in PROGMAN.EXE if it's a DOS program.   You can also drop the program on a button that has already been configured.   If you do so, you will be prompted wether or not you want to reconfigure the button for the new program.   After you have dropped the program on to a button, you can "fine tune" the configuration by right-clicking on the button that was just configured.   This will bring up the popup menu.   You can then select "Edit..." to adjust the configuration.

NOTE: You cannot configure or reconfigure buttons when Launch! is in read-only mode.

Configuring the General Options

You can configure Launch!'s general options by clicking on the grey area of the Launch! window.   You can also configure them by right-clicking on one of Launch!'s buttons, then selecting "Launch! Config..." from the popup menu.   (See also <u>The Popup Menu</u>)

The following figure shows the Launch! configuration screen:

The **general options** that can be configured include:

• **Save Position On Close** - If this box is checked, Launch! will save its current screen position.   Next time you run Launch!, it will be located at that position.

• **Always On Top** - Launch! will stay on top of other windows even if it does not have the focus when this box is checked.

• **Minimize On Launch** - Launch! will minimize itself after you click on a configured button if you have this box checked.

• **Status Bar** - If this option is checked, a small text bar appears at the bottom of Launch!   When you move the mouse over any of the configurable buttons on Launch!, the status bar will display the description that the button is configured with.   If no description was defined, the executable that the button is configured with is shown instead.   The following figure shows an example of what the status bar looks like:

• **Show Time If Blank** -   If the status bar is blank, the current time and date will be shown.   To use this option, **Status Bar** must be checked.   This option and **Hide If Blank** cannot be checked at the same time.   When the status bar is displaying the time, it will always be shown in red text.   The following figure shows what the status bar looks like with this option checked:
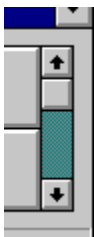
5:08:33 pm, January 28, 1994

- **Hide If Blank** - If the status bar is blank, it will be hidden from view.   To use this option, **Status Bar** must be checked.   This option and **Show Time If Blank** cannot be checked at the same time.   The following figure shows what the bottom of Launch! looks like without a status bar.

- **Ignore Clicks On Border** -   By default, the general configuration screen will come up when you click on the grey border on the Launch! form.   Checking this box will disable that.   (You can always bring up the general configuration screen by selecting "Launch! Config..." from the Popup Menu.)

- **Read-Only Mode** -   Checking this box will place Launch! in a read-only mode.   No buttons can be configured or reconfigured while Launch! is in this mode.   Most general configuration options cannot be reconfigured while Launch! is in this mode either.   To take Launch! out of read-only mode, just uncheck this box.   Setting Launch! in read-only mode may be useful if you have configured Launch! and you do not want it to change.

The following items allow you to define the **button configuration**:

- **Rows & Columns** - The number of rows and columns of buttons that Launch! will show.   Launch! is limited to a maximum of 50 rows and 50 columns. **WARNING:** displaying several hundreds of buttons will require a large amount of system resources.   Launch! will close (without saving its configuration) if it cannot allocate the system resources required to display the number of buttons you specified.

- **Maximum Rows Visible** - If this value is LESS than the **Rows** value, then Launch! will only show this number of rows of buttons at one time.   The other rows can be viewed by clicking on the scroll bar that will be located on the right side of the Launch! form.   This feature allows you to have the convenience of many configurable buttons on Launch!, without having to sacrifice valuable desktop space.   The following figure shows what the right side of Launch! looks like when the scroll bar option is checked:

- **Pixel Height & Width** - Defines the size of the picture in each button.   The smaller the picture, the smaller the button will be.   (The default size is 32 pixels.)

The following items are miscellaneous functions that can be performed:

- **Force Immediate Save** - Normally the configuration of Launch! is saved when Launch! is closed. Pressing this button will immediately save it.

- **Revert** - Reconfigures Launch! with the last saved configuration.   The current configuration is not saved.   You will be asked for confirmation when you press this button.

- **About...** - Displays some information about Launch!, including its version number.   The memory free and system resources free are also displayed on this screen.

- **Online Help...** - Brings up the online help.   (Will only work if LAUNCH!.EXE and LAUNCH!.HLP are located in the same directory!)

- **Windows** - Inside this frame are three buttons.   Pressing **Exit** will cause Windows to close safely, and quickly.   Pressing **Restart** will cause Windows to safely shut down, exit, then restart.   Pressing **Reboot** will cause Windows to safely shut down and exit, then your computer will be rebooted.   **NOTE:** You will not receive confirmation when you press one of these buttons.   They're designed to be a fast way to exit Windows, so a confirmation screen would defeat their purpose.

Contacting the Author

If you have any questions or suggestions, you can contact the author by writing to:

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NOTE: If you receive an error message while running Launch!, particularly an **"unable to unload in this context"** error, please report it to me.   Try to be specific as to what you were doing with Launch! when the error occurred.   I have received this error once, but was unable to reproduce it.

Also, please do not hesitate to report any other errors or bugs that you may find.

Launch! version 1.6a

Contents

Introduction

Using Launch!

Other Information

Launch! version 1.6a was written using **Microsoft Visual Basic version 3.0 Pro**.   It was compiled on January 31, 1994.

Launch! Help (this file) was written using **WhizNotes version 1.2** and **Microsoft Word version 2.0a for Windows**.   It was compiled on January 31, 1994, using the **Microsoft Help Compiler version 3.10.504 (extended)**.

Installation

The installation of Launch! is simple.   Place the following files in the respective locations:

LAUNCH!.EXE   **-** Any directory
LAUNCH!.HLP   - Same directory as LAUNCH!.EXE
THREED.VBX   - WINDOWS\SYSTEM directory.
CMDIALOG.VBX   - WINDOWS\SYSTEM directory.

IMPORTANT: If these VBX files are already in your WINDOWS\SYSTEM directory, check the dates of the files and use the newest ones.   (The older ones should be deleted.)

Launch! was written using Microsoft Visual Basic version 3.0.   Just like all other Visual Basic 3.0 applications, Launch! requires the file VBRUN300.DLL to be in the WINDOWS\SYSTEM directory.

Launching an Application

Once one of the buttons on Launch! has been configured, the program you configured the button with can be launched by just clicking on the button.

If for some reason the program cannot be launched, you will be given an error code and message explaining the reason.

Registering Launch!

Please print this form, fill it out, and mail to:

Rodney M. Savard
4507 South Kent Street
Kennewick, WA 99337-4510

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____   Zip:_____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Enclosed is $_____ to cover the registration for _____ copies of Launch!   ($15.00 each)

(If you provide your e-mail address, you will receive your registration number sooner.)

Thank you for supporting the shareware software concept and encouraging the future development of Launch! and other programs written by Rodney Savard.

NOTE: You may purchase the source code to Launch!, and have royalty-free rights to use, modify, reproduce, and distribute Launch!   The price of the source code is $65.00.   (You are not required to pay the $15 registration fee--the source code you receive will have the shareware portions of it removed.) Launch! uses functions only available in Visual Basic 3.0, therefore the code will be sent in Visual Basic 3.0 format.   It will also be given in ASCII format so that it can be brought up in Visual Basic 2.0. (Launch! will require slight modifications to work in Visual Basic 2.0--details will be included.)

Enclosed is $_____ to cover the cost of purchasing the source code to Launch! plus royalty-free rights to use, modify, reproduce, and distribute Launch!   ($65.00)

If you are purchasing the source code, specify the disk size you prefer:
[   ] 3.5"
[   ] 5.25"

The Popup Menu

This menu comes up when you right-click on one of Launch!'s buttons.   The button that is under the mouse pointer when you right-click on it is the button that will be affected by the following commands. The items on the menu include:

• **Edit...** - This allows you to change the configuration of the button, including the program, parameters, working directory, and icon it uses.   If Launch! is in read-only mode, this menu item will read "View..." instead of "Edit...".   In read-only mode, you are allowed to view the configuration of a button, but you cannot change anything.

• **Clear** - This clears the configuration of the button.   You will be prompted to confirm your action if you select this menu option.   This menu item is disabled in read-only mode.

• **Swap** - This allows you to swap two buttons around.   If you choose this option, you must then pick the target button (the button to swap with).   The source button will appear flat when you're prompted to select the target button.   If you change your mind about swapping buttons, click on the source (flat) button to cancel the swap.   This menu item is disabled in read-only mode.   The following figure shows an example of how Launch! may appear during the swap process:

• **Launch! Config...** - Brings up the General Configuration screen.

• **Help...** - Brings up this online help screen.   (Will only work if LAUNCH!.EXE and LAUNCH!.HLP are located in the same directory!)

• **Cancel** - Closes the popup menu.   (Clicking outside of the popup menu will also close it.)

VBRUN300.DLL

This is a dynamic-link library (DLL) required by all programs written in Visual Basic.   If you do not already have a copy of this file, you can get it off of most BBS's and online services.   Most likely you can find it at the same place you found Launch!