FastMenu

Program Version: 2.0

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Package Contents

When you downloaded this package it should have contained the files listed below. If it did not contain these files, or you suspect the package may have become corrupted, please check our web site for the full software package.

FastMenu.exe	The Main Autorun program, Copy to this CD
FastProg.exe	This file is used to create your INI File, do not copy to CD.
Fastmenu.hlp	This file. Your reading it. Right now.
FastMenu.ini	The default INI file, use FastProg.exe to create your own version.
Fast_01.ini	This is a sample INI, you can delete this when you create your own menus.
logo.bmp	Background logo image, create your own and replace this file with it.
autorun.inf	Autorun setup file, copy this to the ROOT directory of your CD.
start.wav	This sound will play when the program starts, optionally replace.
change.wav	This sound will be played when the program changes INIs (goes to a sub-menu).
readme.txt	Instructions on location of this file.
Gen_CD.ico	This is an Icon that will represent your CD on User's machines, replace if you wish with one of your liking.

System Files

You may also wish to download Sysfiles.zip, this file contains certain files which can help ensure your CD will autorun correctly on most all systems. You can find a link to these files, which are shared by all of our applications, at the end of each programs homepage. Unzip the files contained in the ZIP file to the same directory as the autorun program.

We strongly recommend including these system files if you plan to distribute your CD. While the software runs without these files on many system, on some computers the software will not function unless these are present.

Step-by-Step Instructions

Create a directory and unzip all the files into it. The program is ready to run. The program does NOT require any installation. To set up for your CD just follow the following steps:

- Create an "FastMenu" directory (see NOTE)

- Unzip the files into this directory

- Optionally unzip SysFiles.ZIP (downloadable separately) into the same directory. This makes sure your program should work on all systems.

- Create your own logo.bmp file for the flash image (and copy it to the directory).

- Run the FastProg.exe to create your INI file. Copy this INI file over to your FastMenu directory. You DO NOT need to copy the FastProg INI file programmer, it is for INI creation only.

- Replace the included "start.wav" with you own wave sound if you like.

- Write your CD, making sure you moved the autorun.inf file to the root directory of the CD (the rest must be in a subdirectory).

NOTE that the supplied autorun.inf assumes you copied the program into a directory call FastMenu, and that you will use the "Gen_CD.ico" icon provided in the package to represent your CD. Open the autorun.inf file to change these details.

NOTE the software MUST be in a subdirectory, it has not been programmed to work from the root directory.

Programming the INI

You enter the button text, size and command by clicking on the individual buttons.

The "Bitmap to be Used" Field is for the title bitmap. You have to place all background bitmaps and INIs in the same directory as FastMenu.

The Submit button in the Registration Information section simply checks your registration information to confirm it has been entered correctly.

You are not allowed to have blank captioned buttons, there must be at least one character describing the button. Use the "&" symbol to create a keyboard shortcut to the item. Such that EXIT would actually be E&XIT.

CommandLine Arguments

Commandline arguments are strings which you pass to programs to instruct them in their operation. The most basic is often a program will open a file that is passed as a commandline argument. An Example of this might be the following string passed to MS Windows NotePad:

```
C:\Windows\Readme.txt
```

which is simply instructing NotePad to open the windows Readme file. Commandline arguments are often referred to as "slash codes", as the string of text passed to the program often starts with a slash. One real use in CD Authoring is when you wish to include a viewer for documents you are distributing on the CD. In this way you can open a document on the CD in a program on the CD.

You can now pass command line switches ("slash codes") to programs with FastMenu. To do this just add your commandline argument in the configurations box titled "Any Commandline Arguments (programs only)" (or enter it directly into the INI with a text editor directly under "Commandline Arguments (If Any)").

In many instances you will want to refer to the CD-Drive when passing Commandline arguments to your program. Some programs (very few) will allow a relative path as a commandline argument, but most require you put the full path to the file you wish to open. If an absolute path is given problems occur when the User places the CD in a drive with a different Drive Letter (Your CD Drive might be E: drive, but theirs may be D:, or F: or...). To overcome this problem we have introduced a variable (%CD%) which replaces the drive letter in your commandline argument. Then the software replaces this variable with the drive letter the CD is currently being run from. In this way your Commandline argument, and your CD, will work in any drive, regardless of the CD drive letter.

Therefore the above string would be:

```
%CD%:\Windows\Readme.txt
```

Please note the retention of the colon [:] in the above statement. PLEASE NOTE that this is NOT the format to simply open a document or start a program, IT IS FOR COMMANDLINE ARGUMENTS ONLY. If you want to simply open a document or start a program please see Button Command Summary

Creating an Exit Button

When creating the INI file in FastProg, the buttons have no commands associated with them by default. This is shown by striking-out the text (Strikethru Text) which involves a line drawn through the text on the button. Buttons that have no command associated with them function as EXIT buttons, that is when you click them in FastMenu they will cause the program to close (without executing any commands). To create an Exit button, simply click one of the buttons (without dragging) and enter your button text (strangely enough I expect people would often enter "E&XIT"), then delete any command (or "link") information so that the text entry area is blank.

Your button should now appear as "EXIT" with the X underlined (the & symbol did that), and be struck through (have a line running through the text). DON'T WORRY, the line will not be through the text in FastMenu! Now when your user clicks the "EXIT" button, the program will exit without executing any commands.

Creating Multi-level Menus

With FastMenu you can create a multi-level menu, allowing you to group buttons on separate screens. You can have FastMenu load a separate background image for each group of buttons, have different button text & associated commands, have different number of buttons etc.

To build multi-level menus you simply build separate INI files and for the button command just refer to the INI file you wish to load (do not enter any path information, just the filename).

You must place all the INIs in the FastMenu directory. They must conform to a "fast*.ini" mask. In other words, must be something like "fast001.ini" or "fast_util.ini". You still must have a default INI file named FastMenu.ini.

You can link the menus in any way you like, including lining back to the default FastMenu INI. You would usually do this if you wish to provide a "<< Back" button of some sort.

PS. You can "drag-and-drop" INIs into the FastProg.exe file. When writing the INI please make sure you correctly name it.

It is best to leave an INI file in the INI programmers directory so that it will load up with your preferred defaults and your registration details already entered.

Registration Entry & Key

After you register FastMenu you will receive a Registration Key. This file contains your registration name and number, this file should be placed in your computers root directory on C: drive. **DO NOT DISTRIBUTE THIS KEY.** The Menu Editor and Setup Wizard will retrieve these details as needed when creating your menus. If this is unsuitable, then you can enter these details manually into either program.

To help protect registered users against piracy of their registration code we have now masked the code in the INI file. What this means is that if you open the INI and edit the file with a text editor, then you will have to just open the INI in the Setup Wizard and click "Finish" to reassert your registration details. If you have created menus before you registered remember to open them up in the Menu Editor and click "Save" once you have your key in place.

Button Command Summary

The button commands can be to a file, program, directory or Internet site as follows:

INI Sub-Menus:

Must conform to a "fast*.ini" mask, e.g. fast_01.ini, fast002.ini, or fastprog.ini

File:

"\directory\file.doc" (on the CD), or "C:\windows\readme.txt"

Program:

"\directory\program.exe" (on the CD), or "C:\windows\Notepad.exe"

Directory:

"\directory\directory\" (on the CD), or "C:\windows\", even "C:\windows"

Internet Site:

"http://www.pollensoftware.com/register.htm"

EXIT Buttons:

Remember to leave the command blank for an Exit Button.

Do not include the inverted commas (") when entering commands.

The absence of the drive (eg C:) means that the link is to the CD.

Slash directions above should be followed. These are Operating System "backslashes" not Internet style "forward slashes".

Trailing slashes on directory links do not matter.

The % symbol indicates that the file is in the same directory as the program. We have introduced this to improve the function of the program when downloaded. We cannot guarantee what files you have on your system, so we have opted to open a downloaded file.

Animating Your Title Graphic

With FastMenu you can setup your menu to animate the title graphic through as many frames as you wish. Setting up your animated title graphic is easy, just follow the following simple steps:

Include your default flash screen, for this example we will assume it is a file called "logo.bmp". This will be the first frame in your animation. Next create the rest of you animation frames and name them sequentially, "logo(number).bmp". Such that your next frame (after your default first) would be called "logo1.bmp", the next, "logo2.bmp" and so on.

You can adjust the speed at which you title graphic animates by changing the "Frame Delay" setting in the "Animation Settings" section of the Menu Editor (or the relevant stage of the Setup Wizard). This value is the time to wait before loading the next image. It is measured in milliseconds, such that a value of 1000 would equal 1 second. You can also choose from a number of animation styles, these allow you to achieve different effects and define whether your graphic will animate and then stop, or animate continuously.

You may wish to take into account the speed of your User's CD drives when planning your animated graphics. Very large animated frames will be taxing on their CD drives, as each image will take time to load from the drive. Excessively sized images will also cause a delay of the flash screen start-up, as for display purposes the program preloads the images before attempting to animate through them.

Remember as well that you may well wish to have, for example, only two frames which are not cycled and tell the User more information. This would be suited to say a copyright screen, where the first frame is your copyright notice about the contents of the CD, and the second frame a logo. For this use you would put in a long delay, perhaps 1 or more seconds (1000 or more in the animation delay setting).

Adding an Expiry Date

Many CDs produced today contain information which has a limited lifespan. This includes catalogue CDs, pricelists, product brochures, company or personal resumes, even such CDs as training and certification programs. Many want a method to let the end user know the information on the CD has expired. With FastMenu you can easily do this by entering a date into the "Expiry Settings" section of the Menu Editor or the relevant stage on the Setup Wizard (only if all stages are shown). Then simply enter the message you want to pass to the User in the relevant field, you can press "Enter" to create multiple lines. This message will then be presented to the user when the CD reaches the expiry date. The User then must click "OK" to continue, and the menu will then function as normal (i.e. it is not disabled, and it does not block access to the CD in any way).

Creating a "Browse CD" Button

If you wish to create a "Browse CD" button, as many CDs feature, simply create a button (named something like "Browse CD") and use a single backslash (\) as the command. Then, when the User clicks the "Browse CD" button, the CD will be opened in the root directory in Windows Explorer.

Creating a Root Directory Link

Many CD authors like to provide a link to the software from the root directory of the CD, in case the User has auto-insert notification turned off. If you wish to add a link, the best way is to create a batch file. A Windows Shortcut will not function correctly as it contains drive information, therefore if the User's CD drive is a different letter to yours (highly probable), then the link will not work. Better yet create a batch file wich has a single line, something like:

```
directory\program.exe
```

You may also wish to add a note to the User that the window can be closed after the menu comes up.

Moving and Removing Buttons

FastMenu now makes it easier than ever to move and remove buttons. If you would like to change the order of your buttons just right-click on the button you want to move and drag it to the position you want it. As you drag the button you will see an insert indicator showing you where the button will be moved to when the button is released. It may assist you to use a button gap while moving buttons if you cannot easily see the insert indicator.

If you wish to remove a button simply right-click on the button you wish to delete and drag it off the form to the left or right. Once you release the mouse button you will be prompted as to whether you wish to delete the button. If you choose yes, the Menu Editor will remove the button. In case you want to retrieve the button the editor places it past the end of your menu. For example, say I had a menu of four buttons. I want to delete the second button named "Button 2", and so I drag it off to the left (or right). After I confirm I wish to remove the button I will be left with three buttons. If I want to get the button back all I have to do is adjust the number of buttons to four again. We will then see our deleted button pop up at the bottom of our menu!

Other Information

This program is shareware and may be distributed and freely used for testing purposes in its shareware state. For full information on what usage you are authorized for please see our site.

This program, makes no modifications to your system. It does not add files, it does not make registry entries. To completely remove the program, simply delete the directory which you unzipped it into.

PLEASE NOTE: the program is a 32-bit application, and as such will not run on anything previous to Win95.

This program was written by Sean C Flanagan, and is copyrighted 2000, by Pollen Software Pty Ltd. If you wish a modified copy for commercial application, or have any suggestions for improvements to the program then please contact me.

To register this program (for personal use or for distribution for commercial or non-commercial applications), please see our site:

You can find us on the Internet at:

Autorun Software Central (http://www.pollensoftware.com/)

Registration Details can be found on our Online Registration Page

Program Information and Updates can be found at the Homepage for FastMenu

You can contact us at admin@pollensoftware.com

Our mailing Address is: Pollen Software Pty Ltd
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Version History

Version 2
Added Version History
Changed screen metrics for better display.
Masked Registration Code.
Added Animation Capability.
Added Expiry Date option.
Added Wizard.
Added ability to exit after executing individual buttons.
Major upgrades to Menu Editor to increase usability and new features.
Updated Help files.
Upgraded Wizard to cater for "simple" or "complete" step through styles.
Fixed minor reference issues (in Beta).
Version 1
Initial release.