MBS PC Inventory

Table of Contents:

Overview

MB Scientific's PC Inventory - Overview

This program has three parts, HARDWARE INVENTORY, SOFTWARE INVENTORY AND DIAGNOSTICS.

HARDWARE INVENTORY   will provide a database in which pc's hardware information will be kept. Such information would include nontechnical info such as name, address, phone, support phone, etc. as well as technical info such as irq number, io address, etc.

SOFTWARE INVENTORY will provide a database for keeping detailed records on software titles holding name/adress, phone# as well as details such as .ini settings, etc.

You can also INSTALL via PCI and record the changes made to your system in your software inventory record.

DIAGNOSTICS calls the microsoft MSD program which will give you detailed information on your pc.

The Sharware version allows for manual data entry. The registerd version allows the manufacturer's installation process to automatically update it's record in the inventory.

Contents

Adding, Altering and Deleting Record

Registering

Information on Hardware

Detailed Data Fields and Hardware Settings Summary

Hardware Inventory keeps records on your systems hardware resources. This information consists of deailed records on each hardware resource, and a settings summary table for all the hardware resources.

Detiled record form, is selected from mainmenu | Hardware Inventory | Hardware Inventory Detailed. This form contains the following fields:

RESOURCE :   the type of   hardware resource this is, e.g. com1. The records are keyed on resource. To view the records click on the Resource Combo Box arrow to see the list of records, then double click on one; or click on one to get in the list box, then use the cursor up/down key to move to your selection and then press enter. MAX CHARACTERS=40.

CARD TITLE: formal title of the card, e.g. Xtec Super IDE model 54345(not a real product). Notice that a piece of hardware may have more than one resource. In this example a super ide card provides resources: com1, com2, lpt1, game port, as well as ide controller functionality for the floppy and hard drives.
MAX CHARACTERS=40.

MANUFACTURER NAME AND ADDRESS: it says it itself.
MAX CHARACTERS=120.

MISCELLANUOUS: miscellanuous info field, to contain e.g. com1 is used to attatch to seria mouse, com2 for external modem. MAX CHARACTERS=100.

COMMUNICATIONS: ways of reaching the manufacturer. This would consist of voice/fax, bbs, on-line services etc.MAX CHARACTERS=100

DRIVERS: The information which the hardware requires to run. These setting are in autoexec.bat, config.sys, system.ini, win.ini. The file name containing the settings should appear in {}, and the sections within the file in [ ], per windows ini file convention. For example:

{SYSTEM.INI}
[SECTION1]
settings1
settings2
.
.
[SECTION2]
.
.

MAX CHARACTERS=800.

HARDWARE SETTINGS IRQ number,IO address,BASE address and DMA number.   These appear as a field group in the record. Some or all may be used for a given resource. MAX CHARACTERS=20 each.

The hardware settings are also provided in a summary form selectable from Main Menu | Hardware Inventory | Hardware Settings Summary.

Contents

Adding, Altering and Deleting Records
This information applies to hardware and software inventories

Hardware inventory records are keyed to Hardware Resource and software inventory records are keyed to Software Title.

1) MANUAL DATA ENTRY
PC INVENTORY comes with some pre entered records. To add a new record, from any existing record fill in all the fields and click on ADD RECORD. This would add the record to the end of the data base.

To alter a record, select it first(bring it up from the RESOURCE or TITLE,combo box), then go the right field (click the mouse on it) and edit the field. Then click on ALTER RECORD.

To delete a record first select it, then click on DELETE TOGGLE (see the STATUS field change from ACTIVE to MARKED DELETE, reactivate it by clicking on delete toggle again), then click on ALTER RECORD to record to disk storage. Then from menu select MAIN MENU | HARDWARE IVENTORY | PURGE HARDWARE INVENTORY. The last action physically removes all delete marked records from disk storage.

Without clicking on ALTER or ADD RECORD no data is physically saved.

NOTE: if maximum number of characters per field are exceeded a system error is caused followed by a program prompt informing the user of the error after which the offending field is highlighted. The user should then reduce the field length to under the legal size. SEE INFORMATION ON HARDWARE and SOFTWARE for field length info.

2)   AUTOMATIC UPDATE
The registered version of PC INVENTORY activates the auto-update feature. This allows a manufacturers installation/update procedure to automatically add/alter it's database record in the inventory. Once this feature is active (the program is registered) the user should rely on the manufacturef's install / upgrade process to handle the inventory record, i.e. refrain from manual alterations unless necessary. You can use the programs EXPORT feature to produce and send your system profile to manufacturers for trouble shooting help.

NOTE: In the Key fields of RESOURCE and TITLE, the white space data entries will appear as underscore character "_" in manual entry , where as auto updated white spaces appear normally. For example: "my field 1" will appear as "my_field_1" when manually entered and as "my field 1" when auto-updated.

Contents
Registering
Exporting Information
Information on Hardware
Information on Software

Exproting Information

Both the hardware and software inventories export information in text file format. It can in tern be used to print information, send machine profiles for tech support, move information to other apps etc.

1) Hardware Inventory
You can export the entire data base, HIFILE.MBX, or just the hardware settings summary in to a text file

To export the entire data base menu select MAIN MENU | HARDWARE INVENTORY | EXPORT TO TEXT FILE. This creates the text file INFTABLE.TXT in the working directory of PC INVENTORY.

To export the hardware settings summary menu select MAIN MENU | HARDWARE INVENTORY | HARDWARE SETTINGS SUMMARY. Then click on FILE IT button. This creates the text file SUMTABLE.TXT in the working directory of PC INVENTORY.

2) Software inventory
The entire database, SIFILE.MBX, can be exported in text form :SOFTABLE.TXT. To do so select MAIN MENU | SOFTWARE INVENTORY | EXPORT TO TEXT FILE.

To export an individual record, from the SOFTWARE INVENTORY window click on tht EXPORT button. This produces the file :SOFTREC.TXT containing the record for that software title in text format.

[Contents](#)

(free)Registeration

If you register you get:
1) The auto update feature activated, this would let the manufacturers directly tell you what they have installed in detail, and summary. And when trouble occurs you can send them your machine profile via the export feature so they can help you trouble shoot.
2) All free upgrades, announcements, from MBS
3) A direct EMAIL line to MBS,

To register you must fill in your "REGISTRATION TITLE", in REGTITLE.TXT, and send it to MB SCIENTIFIC to obtain a registration number.
Once you have your registration number menu select MAIN MENU | REGISTRATION | HARDWARE INVENTORY REGISTRATION. Then type in you registration number. If the number is verified (it should happen immediately),   the REGISTRATION STATUS field will change from UNREGISTERED to REGISTERED, other wise it will say WRONG.

NOTE1: your registration title requires you to give us you serial number. You get it from the above registration dialog box's SERIAL NUMBER field. It is a 10 digit number.
Contents
The HATCH program and free registration

Getting a Manufacture's AutoUpdate

Your manufacturer would normally provide you the module to auto-update it's record. Of course not all manufacturers are aware of this program. However, any manufacturer can freely use PC INVENTORY MANUFACTURER'S INTERFACE that accompanies this package. It is a simple C code collection that would let the manufacturer add and update it's record in the inventory as a part of their install/update process or separately. Ask your manufacturer for their auto-update module for PC INVENTORY. (FOR REGISTERED VERSIONS ONLY)

[Contents](#)

Information on Software

Detailed Data Fields

Software Inventory keeps records on your system's software titles. This information consists of deailed records on each title. Select from mainmenu | Software Inventory | Software Inventory Detailed.
This form contains the following fields:

TITLE: a 40 character field containing the official software title.

MANUFACTURER NAME/ADDRESS: a 120 character field.

COMMUNICATIONS: a 120 character field containing the phone/fax/bbs/ internet address etc. of the manufacturer.

SOFTWARE SETTINGS: a 1020 character field containig the settings it has in ini files, autoexec.bat etc.The file name containing the settings should appear in {}, and the sections within the file in [ ], per windows ini file convention. For example:

{SYSTEM.INI}
[SECTION1]
settings1
settings2
.
.
[SECTION2]
.
.
{GENERAL}
all msc type odds and ends

[Contents](#)

Diagnostics

Clicking on the DIAGNOSTICS | RUN option of main menu will run microsoft's MSD program. It is a part of windows and it will examine and give information on the system's standard components such as the mother board,system   memory, video, drives, ports, networking, etc.

Contents

(free) Registration in the HATCH program

The idea of PC INVENTORY is to make it very cheap (order of   single $'s in mass quantity) so that it can practically become a part of the operating system for dos-win-os2 pcs. This means that literally hundreds of   hardware and software manufacturers will over time auto-update the inventory. To facilitate a smooth integration we have decided to give away free registrations to selected owners of selected hardware and software items. In return we ask the participants to work with us and the manufacturers to verify auto update features for their product, and to talk to us as well as other program participants and exchange ideas. TO JOIN, fill out the hatch program info, in the file HATCH.TXT and mail it in. Accepted participants will get a free registration number. The HATCH program will continue through the initial phases of this application.

Contents

Installing Software via PCI

PCI lets one install any dos or windows software and record the changes the installation process does to the system. To begin the installation process fill in a new software record from the SOFTWARE INVENTORY screen   (main menu | software inventory | detailed software inventory) and click on ADD RECORD   to create it in the data base, then click on the INSTALL button.

The SOFTWARE INSTALLATION screen then appears. It has two sections: the installation section and the watch profile section. The watch profile section tells the program where any changes to the system need to be monitored. The defaults are: monitor any added or deleted directories in the detected drives. Added or deleted files in dos and windows control directories. Added or deleted lines in any control files (e.g. config.sys). Added or deleted sections in windows control (ini) files. These defaults are scanned for every time this screen appears. Installers may edit the defaults to make their own, save them (click on SAVE PROFILE),   or load custom profiles (click on LOAD PROFILE).

Once satisfied with the installation watch profile the user may then click on install. The file dialog box appears, from which the installation procedure may be selected. Installation procedure may be manual, i.e. DOS.BAT is provided. Selecting it will spawn a child dos box. The user may then do any normal manual dos operations at the end of which typing EXIT will return the control to PCI. Before evoking the install procedure, PCI will take a "before picture" of the system as defined by the watch profile.

After the installation is satisfactorily completed the user may click on the ANALYZE button. That will take an "after picture" of the system and will compare the before and after pictures. The difference is stored in the DELTACTR.TXT file and placed in the SPECIFICATION field of the software inventory record. If the deltactr.txt file is larger than the field size the rest is left in the text file and the a note is inserted in the field informing you of this. In such a case, the text file must be renamed by the user to something unique and noted appropriately in the field.

It is also recommended that the user manually enter the name(s) of the main executable(s) of the software under the heading {MAIN EXECS}. This, together with the rest of the install watch profile will produce the SOFTWARE INSTALLATION SIGNATURE. When a software inventory record has a signature it can be exported. The export text file can have a variety of uses including it's use for maintenance and trouble shooting,   use by any one else who has already installed the software(without PCI), integration into the future expert system that would have many hardware and software signature and auto update modules.

Contents