Readme for *M*player Beta

Some of the information below probably applies to your installation of Mplayer.   Additional technical information is available in the Help Desk section of our Web site. Mplayer is still in testing – please report problems or suggestions using technical support section of Help Desk.

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1) Automatic online updating of Mplayer software

When you first connect to the Mplayer service to create an account and each time you connect to play games or use chat rooms, the Mplayer server downloads updates to make your Mplayer software current. During the time that it takes to produce and distribute a CD-ROM, we typically make many improvements. Some updates can take a half hour or more.

2) Tips for voice-chatting using a Sound Blaster or compatible sound card

If you have a Creative Labs Sound Blaster or fully compatible sound card properly installed in Windows 95 and your microphone in the right jack, these hints will help your voice sound clearer to others on Mplayer.

a) Double-click on the speaker symbol located in the lower right corner of your screen on the Windows 95 Start Bar. This should bring up a Volume Control Dialog Box. (If you see only a volume dial you didn't double-click fast enough.) There are three sets of volume sliders available, for Playback, Recording and Other. You will use all three, switching among them.

b) From the Options Menu, select Properties.

c) Make sure "Recording" is selected, and under "Show the following volume controls", make sure "Microphone" is checked. Then click on OK.

d) On the Recording Control panel move the Microphone volume temporarily to the middle and make sure the checkbox underneath it is checked.

e) From the Options Menu, select Properties again.

f) Make sure "Playback" is select, and under "Show the following volume controls", make sure "Microphone" is checked there also.

g) On the volume control panel, at the bottom of the Microphone volume control, make sure "Mute" is checked. This does not prevent others from hearing you – it prevents your speakers from feeding back into your microphone.

h) Under the Options menu, look at the Advanced Controls option and make sure it is checked. If it is not checked, select it, otherwise leave it alone.

i)   Move the Microphone Volume bar to its highest setting.   Click on the button underneath labeled Advanced.

j)   At the bottom of this dialog box is a checkbox labeled "AGC for WaveIn" or "Microphone Boost." Check this box, and Select Close.

k)   From the Options menu, select Properties again.

l)   This time, make sure "Other" is selected, instead of Recording, and click OK to show the Voice Commands panel.

m)   Again, move the Microphone Volume slider to its highest setting. Click on the button underneath labeled Advanced.

n)   Check the "AGC for VoiceIn" or "Microphone Boost" box, then click on the Close button.

o)   On Mplayer, enter the Help Desk lobby and create a test room such as "Mike test."

p)   Position the microphone where you will normally use it, and push the Push to Talk button and speak in your "game playing" voice at a normal distance from the mike,

q)   Observe the simulated VU meter under the Push to Talk button. The VU meter should peak in the yellow area, but never reach the red zone, or your speech will sound distorted or even unintelligible.

r)   To make adjustments, open the Mixer panel again, select Properties and Recording to show the Recording Control panel.

s)   Use the Volume slider while you are speaking to keep the VU from reaching the red zone.

t)   That's it. You are done adjusting your microphone volume settings, so you can close the dialog box and go back to playing games.

3) Use PSINet if your ISP is too slow

If you find that game rooms are often red in color because your Internet connection is too slow, or you experience slow or jerky game play, consider using PSINet as your Internet service provider for game play instead of your current provider. Run the Setup program again – Setup will offer you the opportunity to add PSINet support and set up an account. PSINet offers a free trial and should not interfere with your original provider.

4)   Microsoft Windows 95 Service Pack 1 improves TCP/IP support

Microsoft has released update patches to Windows 95 that can make your use of Mplayer more reliable. For example, one patch corrects a memory leak problem in Dial-Up Networking that can cause Mplayer and other Internet applications to fail after an unpredictable period of use. We recommend downloading and installing three patches before using Mplayer.

Kernel32 update   http://www.microsoft.com/windows/software/krnlupd.htm
Exchange update   http://www.microsoft.com/windows/software/exupd.htm
Service Pack 1   http://www.microsoft.com/windows/software/servpak1/sphome.htm.

Users of a current Mplayer CD-ROM will find these updates in a sub-folder called Microsoft Updates. Users who obtained the Mplayer software on Deadlock game CD-ROM or demo collection CD-ROM should download these patches from Microsoft's Web site.

5) TCP/IP driver not bound to Dial-Up Adapter if already present

While you are setting up your system to use PSINet, help screens normally appear asking you to check that the TCP/IP protocol is installed and bound to the Dial Up Adapter. However, if TCP/IP support is already installed, these help screens will not appear. This behavior usually gives the right result. If, however, TCP/IP is bound only to a LAN adapter and you plan to use PSINet to connect to Mplayer instead, for example, because your company's firewall blocks Mplayer access, then you will need to manually bind TCP/IP to the Dial-Up Adapter as follows:

a) Open the Control Panel.

b) Double-click the Network icon.

c) Select "Dial-Up Adapter."

d) Click the Add button.

e) Select Protocol.

f) Click the Add button.

g) Under "Manufacturers", select Microsoft.

h) Under "Network Protocols", select TCP/IP.

i) Click the OK button to close the window.

j) Click OK again to close the Network Window.

6) Mplayer and Firewalls

Mplayer game play is usually fastest over a direct Internet connection. If you want to use Mplayer through a LAN that has a direct Internet connection, you need to confirm that your LAN's firewall is not blocking access to the Mplayer game servers. A firewall is a system that acts as a gateway monitoring all traffic between your company's LAN and the Internet, to prevent authorized traffic in either direction. Many firewalls can selectively block access on certain ports, and disable certain protocols. Mplayer requires access to ports 8000-8999 and uses the TCP/IP and UDP protocols. If a firewall is blocking access, you may find that you can reach the Mplayer Web site, but that when you perform an action that starts the Mplayer client, to play a game or enter a chat room for example, that the connection will fail before your software can be checked to see that it is up to date. Check with your system administrator to see if blocking of Mplayer ports and protocols can be removed.

7) Adding Microsoft Internet Explorer after set up is complete.

To add Microsoft Internet Explorer after Mplayer is already installed or to reinstall it later, find and run the program MSIE20.EXE from the Mplayer CD-ROM.

8) Configuring email and news programs for your PSINet account

If you have set up PSINet as your Internet service provider, you will probably want to configure an email package, such as Microsoft Exchange, Eudora, or the mail features in Netscape, and possibly a news reader program, for use with PSINet. The following information will help you configure these programs for your PSINet account. To configure software for a different Internet service provider, you will need to obtain similar information from that provider.   PSINet has recently announced that it will use distributors to handle consumer account. This change may affect contact or server information given below and in the Mplayer software.

If you need help during this process, contact PSINet at

Email: support@interramp.com

Phone: (717) 770-1705

- Your InterRamp email address is in the form <account number>@interramp.com where <account number> is your login id. (example: us000000@interramp.com).

- Your POP server for receiving mail is pop3.interramp.com.

- Your SMTP server for sending mail is smtp.interramp.com.

- Your Usenet news server is usenet.interramp.com. The server does not require a separate log in procedure or other authentication.

- Your email account on the mail server is your normal account number (example: us0000000)

- Your password for receiving email is the same password associated with your account number that you use to log in.

If you use Microsoft Internet Explorer, be sure to configure it to use the email and news software you just set up as the default programs.