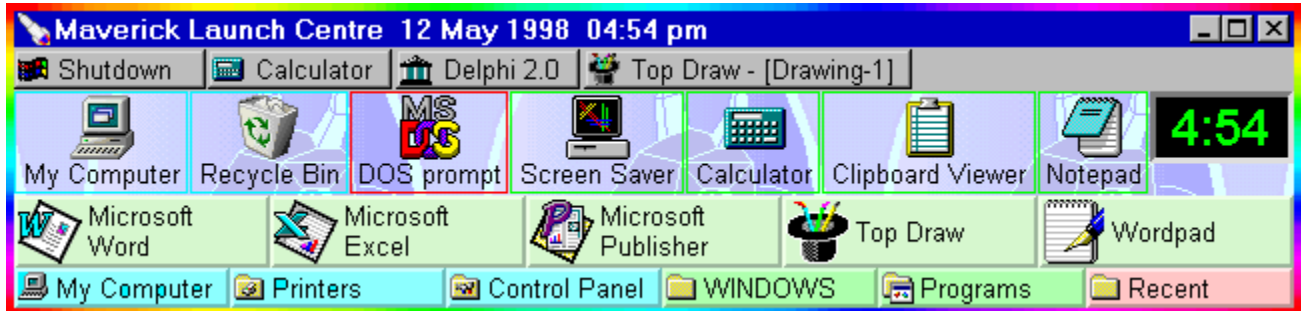




Introduction

95. System requirements : 486 or 586/Pentium with 12 MB of memory, running Windows
- Hard Disk space : Less than 2MB
- Graphics Display : 800 by 600 at 64K colours or better recommended.



The Maverick Launch Centre is designed to give instant access to your most commonly used files and applications. It consists of the Launch Window which may contain as many buttons as you like and file menus which can be opened from buttons that point to folders. It also includes a sophisticated [alarm clock](#).

In order to install the Launch Centre, you simply need to run it from the CD-rom (or floppy disk). It will detect that it is not being run from a hard disk and ask whether you wish to install it.

Written entirely using Borland Delphi, the Launch Centre does not require any special DLLs to be present and does not significantly modify your system in any way e.g. by adding to your System folder (or any other vital folder).

Once running, you may click any button to launch an application, open a document, view the *Control Panel* as a menu and much much more. Press the right mouse button to open a popup menu or right-double-click an item to open the [Universal Dialog](#).

The Launch Centre is highly configurable and can be customised both in behaviour and appearance. Naturally, there is extensive online help – just press F1.

Further more, you can :-

- 1: Create new launch buttons simply by dragging items onto the Launch Window.
- 2: Move single buttons by dragging (with the Control key pressed).
- 3: Select several buttons on which to operate e.g. to move, delete or change colour.
- 4: Create alarms that sound once or repeat from hourly to yearly. (Dates are stored using four-digit years.)
- 5: View the contents of any folder as a menu.

And using file menus you can :-

- 6: Navigate around your entire hard disk or indeed your local network.
- 7: Move, copy or delete single or multiple files (or create shortcuts).

8: Show only certain file types e.g. display only *.DOC files from a launch button to folder *WorkDocs*.

However, most importantly, you should never have to trudge through endless menus from the Start button nor minimise all windows just to launch a new application from a desktop shortcut because the Launch Window can be activated simply by moving the mouse over a permanently visible remnant.

It should be noted that the Launch Centre makes extensive use of the right mouse button. A single click will normally open a popup menu, as is the custom now under Windows. However, the Launch Centre goes a stage further by recognising a right-double-click to open the Universal Dialog at a page appropriate to the location of the double-click. This should be considered, conceptually, as similar to opening a property sheet for a file (or shortcut) under Windows. Indeed, using a right-double-click on an item in a drop-down file menu will launch its properties dialog. Also take note of the fact that the Launch Centre recognises a great many keystrokes to perform simple tasks. By using the keyboard as well as the mouse, you should find the Launch Centre very quick to use indeed. See Using the Keyboard.

NB: If you require context-sensitive help for a popup menu, you must first open the menu, and then move the mouse over the menu before pressing the F1 key. Furthermore, the highlighted menu item must not lead to a submenu.

If you encounter a problem, there is a very good chance that this help file contains the answer. You may wish to look at the sections Known Bugs and Quick Questions and Answers. Unlike other applications, all known bugs, etc. are discussed in this help file. You won't have to trudge through *ReadMe* files to solve problems. (Actually there is a small *ReadMe* file but that is only really concerned with installation.)

Depending on how compatible Versions 4 or 5 of Windows NT are with Windows 95, the Launch Centre may also work on these platforms, though as this help file is being written, the Launch Centre has not been so tested. Some problems are to be expected in certain areas, particularly network support, printer support and possibly the Task Menu.

The Launch Window

The Launch Window is the rectangular window on which the Launch Buttons are placed. It has various properties which can be adjusted. This is achieved by using the right mouse button to double-click an empty region of the window (or the title bar). This will open the Universal Dialog at the required page.

Also note that the Launch Window may be aligned to any edge by right-clicking an empty region and choosing **Align to Edge** from the popup menu. To align to the top or bottom edges, the window must be wider than it is high, conversely to align to the left or right edges it must be higher than it is wide (not recommended for the Primary Launch Window). The window aligns to the nearest appropriate edge.

The Launch Buttons

In order to use the Launch Centre fully, it is vital that Launch Buttons be understood. These buttons can be used to open folders (directories), open applications, open documents or even

open internet sites (using .URL files).

The simplest way to create a new Launch Button is to open *Explorer* or a folder button already created, and drag a file onto the Launch Window. (You can drag several files from *Explorer* at once if you wish.) This will create a launch button with various default properties. To edit the properties of a launch button, use the right mouse button to double-click on it. The Universal Dialog will open at the required page.

To delete a launch button, right-click on it and choose **Delete** from the popup menu. (If this menu item is dimmed you will need to set the checkbox **Allow delete** on the Options page of the Universal Dialog.)

To create a new launch button from scratch, right-click an empty region of the Launch Window and choose **New launch button** from the popup menu. This will both create a blank button and open the Universal Dialog on the Launch button page.

TIP: Creating new buttons from scratch should rarely be needed. Normally you should just locate the required target file and drag it onto an empty area of the Launch Window. You may drag shortcuts from the Windows Desktop onto the Launch Window too. Also, the items on the *Desktop* may be viewed as a drop-down menu by double-clicking an empty area of the Launch Window with the left mouse button.

NB: Some items on the Windows Desktop cannot be dragged into the Launch Centre. Such items are said to be virtual, i.e. they do not correspond directly with files or directories. Such items can be dragged only within the Launch Centre, e.g. *Inbox*, *My Computer* and *Recycle Bin*.

The Alarm Clock

This can be configured to show time either in 24 or 12 hour format. It is possible to set up an unlimited number of alarms which may be programmed to repeat hourly, daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly, or yearly. To configure the alarm clock, use the right mouse button to double-click on the clock. The Universal Dialog will open at the required page.

If the clock is not visible, try opening the Universal Dialog at the Launch Window page (i.e. right double-click on the Launch Window) and then select the clock page and ensure that there is a tick in the box labelled **Clock Visible**. (For Windows other than the Primary Window, ensure that the checkbox labelled **Create Clock** is set.) If the clock is still not visible, see Quick Questions and Answers.

Resizing the Launch Window.

Provided that the **Border style** of the Launch Window is *Sizeable* (see the Launch Window page of the Universal Dialog) then the Launch Window may be resized just like any other application window on the desktop. (i.e. move the mouse over an edge or corner of the Launch Window, press the left mouse button when the mouse cursor changes shape and move the mouse while keeping the mouse button pressed.)

Resizing and Moving Controls in the Launch Window.

It is possible to resize and to move any item in the Launch Window. To do this, position the mouse cursor over the item (clock or launch button) and press and keep pressed the *Control* key (located below the *Shift* key on most keyboards). The mouse cursor should change shape (to a little man with a rope or to a double-headed arrow). Depending on the position of the mouse cursor within the item, you will be able to resize or move the item by dragging with either mouse button.

Launch buttons may also be moved another way. Drag out a rectangle (move the mouse diagonally over the Launch Window whilst keeping the left mouse button pressed). A highlighting rectangle will appear. When the mouse button is released, all the launch buttons which intersect the rectangle will be selected and a popup menu will appear. From here, you may choose to move all the buttons together. (You don't even need to click on the popup menu item before dragging the buttons since this is the default action of this menu.)

NOTES: If, on the Launch Window page of the Universal Dialog, the checkbox **Auto Arrange** is set :-

1: Generally, only the clock should be resized in this way. Buttons sizes should be changed by adjusting caption position, etc.

2: Whenever the Launch Window is resized, buttons will be restored to their default sizes and positions.

3: Whenever buttons are moved by dragging, automatic tidying is performed.

Microsoft Office 95

The Office bar broadly serves the same purpose as the Launch Centre. Both are designed to give quick access to often used software. However, the Launch Centre is considerably more powerful, in many areas.

Whilst there are no major compatibility issues between the Launch Centre and the MS Office Toolbar, it is fair to say that they are not natural bedfellows !! If you wish to use both rather than rely on the Launch Centre, the recommended method is to drag the Office Toolbar to the right of the screen and to switch off its *Auto hide* feature. NB: If you wish to use the Office Toolbar, it should be loaded before the loading Launch Centre.



Maverick Launch Centre Help: Contents

This is a context-sensitive help file. To open this help file from the Launch Centre, press the function key F1. If you do not have a mouse, use the *Up* and *Down* arrow keys to scroll to a jump and press *Enter*.

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Recommendations

Some business users typically use only a few applications frequently (e.g. *MS Word* and *Excel*) but create many documents. If this describes you, perhaps you should think about configuring the Launch Centre in a document-orientated manner. If, however, you are a home user, typically launching any of a large number of applications and games, but only creating a few documents, you should consider configuring the Launch Centre in an application-orientated manner.

Document orientation

Basically, this means creating Launch button to folders and launching your applications from there.

Lets take the simple example of *MS Word*. Whilst this is capable of many functions, 95% of people will only ever use it for writing letters or manuscripts, etc

1: Hopefully, if you are well organised anyway, these documents will be arranged in separate folders, perhaps with subfolders. In this case, simply drag whichever folders you choose (from Windows *Explorer* or from another open folder) onto an empty area of the launch window (or its title bar). Folder buttons will be created and arranged automatically (unless **Auto Arrange** is switched off on the Launch Window page of Universal Dialog).

2: If there are file-types in these folders in which you have little or no interest, e.g. backup files, you can arrange to show only selected file types in each folder. To do this, right double-click the folder button to open the Universal Dialog at the Launch Button page, and enter the editbox labelled **Show files of type**. Type in the following :

.Doc;*.Dot* Now, whenever you open this folder, only files of type *.Doc* and of type *.Dot* will be displayed. (if you occasionally want to display all files, open the folder in the normal way, right-click any item to open a popup menu, and choose **Show all files.)

3: Optionally, you may wish to copy templates to these folders. *Word* templates use the extension *.Dot*. If you copy such template files to the document folder, you may create new documents simply by clicking the template. Unfortunately, *Word* will not, by default, save the newly created document directly to your folder. You may, however, create a macro that changes the document directory to the current directory and save it to *Normal.Dot*. For the macro to run automatically, it must be called *AutoExec*. See below.

NOTE: When the Launch Centre opens an application or document file, it does so using the API function *ShellExecuteEx*. By default, the Launch Centre uses the folder in which the application, document or template is located as the current directory if no other is specified. It is this directory referred to by the **CurDir\$** function in the macro below. So if you create the suggested macro, and you have created a launch button to open *Word* directly, remember to define a working directory for it, otherwise the document directory is likely to be set to something like *C:\MS Office\Office*. You will have to do the same thing with any desktop shortcuts, etc. you have too.

4: You may, if you wish, create launch buttons that open templates. Thus, you could create one button to start up *Word* with a letter template, and another to start *Word* with a web template. Create these button by dragging to an empty area of the launch window (or

its title bar) and then edit them by right double-clicking to open their dialogs. If you have created the suggested macro, don't forget to define the **Working Directory** if you want documents created from the template to be located elsewhere.

Application orientation

Basically, this means creating launch buttons directly to applications.

1: Locate the appropriate .EXE; .LNK or .PIF files. To do this you may search through the items and sub-folders in the *Programs* folder. You may also, right-click on *My Computer*, and choose **Find** from the popup menu. Enter *.exe;*.lnk;*.pif on the top line of the resulting dialog box. You may launch each item found directly from the **Find** dialog. Having so tested each item that you want, drag it to an empty area of the launch window (or the its title bar) and a launch button will be created.

2: Right double-click the button to open its dialog. You will certainly wish to edit the **Caption**. You should also consider changing the **Caption Position**. If you choose **Right**, the caption will be displayed to the right of the icon. In this case, be aware that the caption may be split over two lines. Enter a vertical line (|) to split the caption.

3: Choose other items from the **Find** dialog until you are satisfied.

General points

1: All modern display adapters (aka graphics cards) are capable of high colour resolutions. However, often they are not set up correctly. The Launch Centre works best in graphics modes of 32K colours or better. In either 256-colour or 16-colour display modes, it may display quirky behaviour. A certain amount of effort has gone into minimising such problems, however, some issues remain. If you wish to change the display settings of your computer, you may do so through **Control Panel | Display | Settings**. Choose a 16 bit mode (64K colours : aka *High Color*) or a 24/32 bit mode (aka *True Color*).

NOTE: If **this text** appears more **purple** rather than **pink**, your display may need adjusting.

2: You may choose any colour for each button. If you wish to change the colour of a single button, do so through its dialog. However, you may choose to change the colour of several buttons. To do this, press the left mouse button and move the mouse diagonally over the buttons you wish to alter. When you release the mouse button, a popup menu will appear. Choose **Change Colour ...**. A standard dialog will appear. If you wish to cancel the operation from the popup menu, you must choose **Cancel** rather than clicking outside the menu since the default action is to initiate multiple dragging.

3: If you wish to move a button, press the *Control* key. Whilst this key is pressed, you may drag buttons around to your hearts content. Note, however, that if **Auto Arrange** is set, button arrangement will be tidied after dragging and buttons of different heights will be placed on different lines.

4: Get to know the Launch Centre by experimenting and read all of this help file. The Launch Centre is highly configurable, both in appearance and behaviour, so if you don't like a feature, you can probably change it.

AutoExec macro for MS Word

```
Sub AutoExec()  
  
    '    Set documents directory to working directory  
    '    Written 01/05/98 by Jim Turner  
    '    Useful for creating documents from templates located in  
document folders.  
    '    Save to the template Normal.dot  
  
Options.DefaultFilePath(Path:=wdDocumentsPath) = CurDir$  
  
End Sub
```

Though it hasn't been so tested, this macro should work with other *MS Office* applications.

Universal Dialog

- [Introduction & About page](#)
- [Clock page](#)
- [File Menus page](#)
- [Launch Button page](#)
- [Launch Window page](#)
- [Options page](#)
- [Registration page](#)
- [System page](#)



Popup Menus

The Launch Centre provides several popup menus. Using the right mouse button to click on any item will cause a popup menu to appear. Often, features on popup menus are accessible by other means. Also note that the precise appearance of the menus may vary depending on circumstances and may be changed if, subsequent to the writing of this help file, new features are added, so the images of menus included, should be taken as a guide only.

The Buttons Menu



This menu appears when you press (and keep pressed) the left mouse button to drag out a rectangle (by moving the mouse diagonally). When the menu appears (as the mouse button is released) the launch buttons under the rectangle will be selected.

Drag these buttons Will allow you to move all the buttons as one. Dragging will start when a mouse button is pressed and finish when it is released. In fact, you do not need to select this menu item. Dragging will begin by default if you press a mouse button within the Launch Window. In this case the menu will close automatically.

Delete these buttons Will only be enabled if the Options checkbox **Allow delete** is set. If this item is chosen, a warning always will be given before deleting the buttons.

Try to resolve Will only affect buttons that refer to shortcuts (i.e. PIF and .LNK files.) It is equivalent to choosing **Resolve Link** or **Resolve Icon** from the The Launch Button Menu for each button.

Justify Row Will cause the buttons on a row to be stretched to fill in the gap at the end of the row.

Change Caption Position Opens a submenu to allow the format of several buttons to be changed in a single operation.

Change Opacity Opens a submenu to allow transparent buttons to be made opaque or vice-versa.

Change Colour... Opens a standard dialog to change the colour of the selected buttons.

Cancel Should be used to close the menu without taking any action. Closing the menu by any other means (e.g. pressing the *Escape* key) is equivalent to selecting **Drag these buttons**. However, clicking either mouse button will terminate dragging. This behaviour is likely to change in future versions.

The File Menu



This menu appears when you right-click an item on a drop-down file menu. It is a context sensitive menu. The top section will be created according to the file item which launched it. Items in other sections may be made invisible or be disabled.

Explore Will open Windows *Explorer* (two-pane view of a folder).

Open Will open Windows *Explorer* (one pane view of a folder).

Find Will open the Windows *Find (files)* dialog box.

Quick view Will open the Windows *QuikView.exe* program used for inspecting various type of file. Since it is possible to install viewers for file types other than the standard ones used by Windows, the precise effect of this menu item cannot be predicted. Also see The Registry.

Print Will attempt to print a document. This will only be successful if the document type is such that the application is able to print without fully entering the application. For instance, during testing, MS Word 6 would not print a document from this menu (nor indeed would any Windows 3.1x application) but MS Word 7 for Windows 95 should. Also see NB: below.

Send to Offers a submenu built from .LNK files located in the folder *Windows\SendTo*. Please note that this may behave slightly differently to the *Send To* menu item in *Explorer*. It should be possible to send faxes etc. using this method but this will depend on installed software. NB: The Launch Centre's capability's are somewhat restricted regarding this operation. Also see The Registry.

Rename Will allow the user to type in a new name for a file. Provided the user does not press the Escape key, Windows will be instructed to change the name of the file. (NB: If the new filename is longer than the old one, you may have to choose the item **Reload from drive** to correct the display if the menu is too narrow to accomodate the new name.)

It is also possible to change the volume name of a disk drive with this method, however, any such change will not be reflected in Windows *Explorer* unless F5 is pressed to refresh the display. Arguably, this is a bug in *Windows 95*, and indeed may be fixed by Microsoft, however, it may be fixed in a future version of the Launch Centre.

Delete Will instruct Windows to delete the file. It may be sent to the *Recycle Bin* depending upon the configuration of Windows. **Delete** will call **Reload from drive**. (See below.)

Edit opens a submenu allowing cut and paste operations to be performed. These operations work independantly of Windows *Explorer*, however you may **Paste** items placed on the Windows Clipboard by *Explorer*. In this case, you will be asked whether you wish to move or copy files.

Items cut or copied by the Launch Centre are not placed on the Windows Clipboard. Thus, if you have stored an image on the clipboard, using the Launch Centre's internal cut and paste operations will not destroy the image.

New Opens a submenu from which you may create a new folder or a new shortcut. You will then be prompted automatically using the **Rename** item above.

Format Drive Will instruct Windows to format a removable disk. NB: As this help file is being written, this feature is NOT available.

Sort by name Will call **Reload from drive** (see below) but files will be sorted by name rather than by extension. See Drop-down file menus.

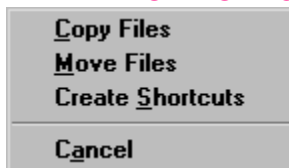
Reverse sort Will call **Reload from drive** but files will be sorted in reverse order.

Reload from drive Will cause the menu to be rebuilt by scanning the disk again. You should rarely need to call this routine directly but it is often called by other items on the menu or automatically when the Launch Centre detects a change to the items listed in the menu.

Cancel Will close the menu without performing any action.

NB: The top section of the menu is created by reading data out of the Windows *Registry*. The items will be broadly similar to those on the equivalent menu in *Explorer* but not identical. Future versions of the Launch Centre may use the *Explorer* context menu, but as this help file is being written, certain problems could not be overcome. In the meantime, though one or two items may be missing when compared with *Explorer*, you may get one or two bonus items such as **Print To**. For reasons known only to Microsoft, this operation (or verb) is normally used by Windows solely for Drag & Drop operations and is not available in *Explorer* context menus.

The File Move Menu



This menu appears when there is an attempt to drag a file either onto a launch button that refers to a directory, or onto a directory item on a drop-down file menu.

Copy Files Will instruct Windows to copy the selected files to the destination.

Move Files Will instruct Windows to move the selected files to the destination.

Create Shortcuts Will instruct Windows to create shortcuts to the selected items and place those shortcuts in the destination directory. (Windows should choose to create .PIF files for Dos programs and .LNK files for Windows programs automatically. The Launch Centre does not verify that such decisions are correct but testing has not revealed any problems to date.)

Cancel Will prevent any file actions from taking place.

NB: Undo information is provided so that move and copy operations can be undone using Windows *Explorer*. Open the appropriate folder and choose the *Edit* menu.

The Launch Button Menu



This menu appears when you right-click a launch button.

Open dialog Opens the Universal Dialog at the Launch Button page. Selecting this menu item is equivalent to double right-clicking on the launch button.

Launch Will execute the **Command** string of the launch button passing other details as required. Selecting this item is equivalent to left-clicking on the launch button.

Drop-down Will only be enabled for launch buttons which refer to folders. Selecting this item may be equivalent to selecting **Launch**. It will open a drop-down menu being the contents of the folder. See Drop-down File Menus.

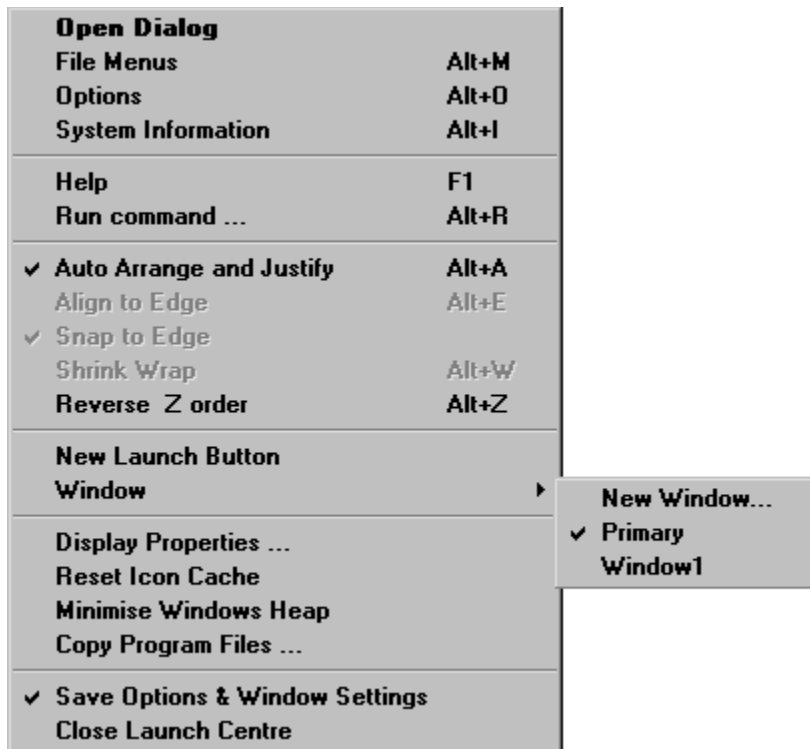
Delete button Will only be enabled if, on the the Options page of the Universal Dialog, the checkbox **Allow delete** is set. Selecting this item will delete the launch button. (NB: If the checkbox **Save settings** on the Options page is clear, the button will reappear when the Launch Centre next opens unless you manually click the Options **Save Settings NOW** button.)

Resolve link Will only be visible if the launch button refers to a .LNK file. Selecting this item will cause the launch button to be reprogrammed using data read from the .LNK file. (NB: .PIF files, used to launch Dos programs, cannot be resolved since they contain much more information.)

Resolve icon Will only be visible if the launch button refers to a .PIF file. Selecting this item will remove the *shortcut overlay arrow* from the icon of the launch button. It will do this by reprogramming the launch button icon data. (This item will be disabled if reprogramming has already been done.)

Explore, Open and Find, etc. will be created in a context sensitive manner. This section is similar to the top section of a File Menu.

The Launch Window Menu



This menu appears when you right-click an empty area of the Launch Window (or the title bar).

- Open Dialog** Will open the Universal Dialog at the [Launch Window](#) page.
- File Menus** Will open the Universal Dialog at the [File Menu](#) page
- Options** Will open the Universal Dialog at the [Options](#) page.
- System Information** Will open the Universal Dialog at the [System](#) page.

Align to edge Will move and resize the Launch Window placing it on one edge of the screen. It will be placed either on the top or bottom edges (whichever is nearer) or on the left or right edges if the Launch Window is tall rather than wide (not recommended for the Primary Launch Window).

Snap to Edge Will cause the Launch Window to move to the nearest appropriate edge. (The top or bottom edge if the window is wider than tall.) Note: A tick next to this item indicates that the window will automatically snap to an edge when moved close enough. See [Launch Window](#) page of the Universal Dialog.)

Shrink wrap Will resize the client area of the Launch Window (the area where buttons are placed) in such a way that it is just large enough to contain all launch buttons and the clock.

NB: These three items will each be disabled if selecting the item would have no effect.

Reverse Z-order Will normally have no effect, but if one button is obscured by another, this command will make it visible.

Auto Arrange Will tidy up the arrangement of buttons. You should set the desired width of the Launch Window before choosing this menu command. The clock will be placed at the top right corner of the Launch Window. Launch buttons will be arranged by height with the tallest buttons appearing at the top. Buttons of different heights appear on different rows. Normally you will have only two or three heights of buttons in use. The smallest height being used for folders. Buttons are sorted by height, then by vertical position, and then by horizontal

position. In this way, the relative positions of similar buttons is maintained.

New launch button Will create a new launch button on the Launch Window and open the Universal Dialog so that it may be programmed. This item will be disabled if the menu was opened from the title bar (or Task Menu bar) unless there is a tick next to the **Auto Arrange** command. The tick indicates that the buttons will be arranged automatically when the window is resized, etc. See the [Launch Window](#) page of the Universal Dialog.

Window Opens a submenu. Choosing **New Window** will cause a new Launch Window to be created. Choosing any other item will display the associated window. A tick next to a window name denotes the fact that the window data has been loaded and the window created.

NB: To delete a window (i.e. close it and delete its data from the Windows Registry) select the window from the submenu while the *Delete* key is pressed.

Reset Icon Cache Will cause all the icon data that is stored for speeding up the display of drop-down menus to be erased. This need only be called if the icon data becomes invalid due to changes in Windows file associations.

NB: During development of the Launch Centre, a bug was discovered that can cause a system-wide crash if the icon cache is reset immediately after Launching a 32-bit application (i.e. while it is still loading.) Therefore, the **Close On Launch** option for drop-down file menus could cause the system to crash since the icon cache was reset automatically when the last open file menu closed. (You could be forgiven for thinking that Windows must broadcast a message when the icon associated with a file changes, and that the Launch Centre could respond to that message. Think again !!)

Minimise Windows Heap Will call Windows API routine *IMalloc.HeapMinimize*. This will cause the heap to be tidied up.

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Launch Centre calls the Windows API function *SHGetMalloc* to retrieve a pointer to the Shell's Memory allocator. This is then used to store all ItemIDLists. These lists are the equivalent of filenames for virtual folders and items in virtual folders (e.g. *Control Panel*). Virtual folders are displayed with a blue border when viewed as drop-down file menus.

Copy Program Files to Floppy Will cause all the program files that make up the Launch Centre to be copied to floppy disk **A:** The disk must have sufficient capacity (a standard 3½ inch floppy disk is fine). You will be prompted to place a formatted disk in the drive at which point, you may cancel the operation.

Save Options & Window Settings Will cause the current settings of all open Launch Windows (including launch button and alarm data) and options to be saved to disk immediately. (If a tick is placed next to this item, then this action occurs whenever the Launch Centre closes.) All such data is stored in the [Windows Registry](#).

Close Launch Centre Will do just what it says. A warning may be given before closing the Launch Centre depending on the setting within the [Options](#) page of the Universal Dialog.

The System Menu

This menu is created by the Windows operating system for all application windows such

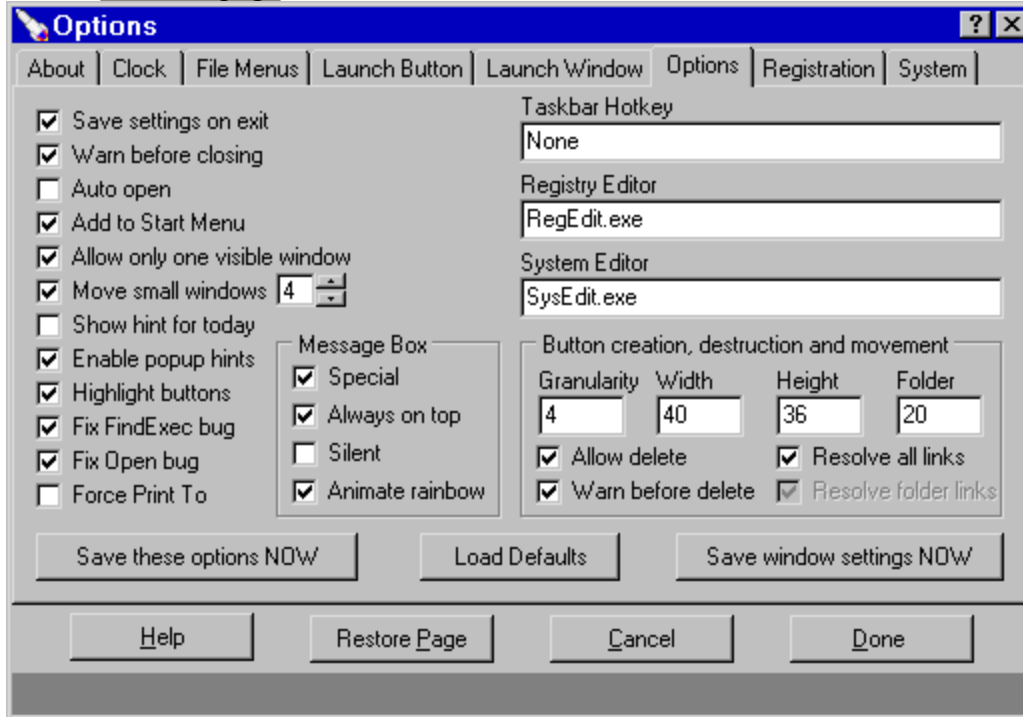
as dialog boxes and the Launch Window of the Launch Centre. Normally, it opens when you right-click on a title bar. However, for a Launch Window, the system menu is only available from the icon at the left of the title bar.



Universal Dialog: Options Page

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The Launch Centre allows several Launch Windows to be created. Settings made through the Options page apply globally to all Launch Windows. This is the main distinction between the type of data on the Options page and the [Launch Window](#) page

On the left of this page are several checkboxes. These perform the following functions.

Message Box | Special, if set, will cause all Launch Centre messages to be passed to an advanced display window. Otherwise, messages will be passed to the Windows API function *MessageBox*. (A few messages are always passed through the special window. Typically this occurs when a checkbox or a help button is required.)

Message Box | AlwaysOnTop, if set, will cause the special message box to be displayed on top of all other windows.

Message Box | Silent, if set, will cause the special message box to be displayed without playing the sound associated with the type of message (e.g. a warning or a question). If you don't have a soundcard installed, unless checked, a beep will sound through the PC speaker whenever a message is displayed.

Message Box | Animate rainbow, if set will cause the rainbow border to slowly move. You may wish to clear this checkbox if you use 3D mouse pointers since these tend to flicker when near the animated border.

Save settings on exit should always be set unless you wish changes to the configuration to be discarded when the Launch Centre is closed. You may wish to clear this checkbox when you are satisfied with your current configuration, but remember that if you create a

new launch button, it will not exist when the Launch Centre is restarted unless the settings are saved. It is for this reason that buttons are provided (at the bottom of the page) to save the options and settings immediately. Also note that when settings or options are saved, they cannot be “unsaved” by clicking the **Restore Page** button. However you may save the settings again after clicking **Restore Page**.

Warn before closing, if set, will cause a warning to be issued before the Launch Centre closes allowing you to keep the Launch Centre open.

Auto open, if set, will cause the Launch Centre to open whenever you switch on or restart the computer. The effect is immediate and is unaffected by the checkbox **Save settings**. NB: This works by creating or deleting a shortcut to the Launch Centre in the Windows *Startup* directory. Also see [Quick Questions and Answers](#).

Add to Start Menu, if set, will allow the Launch Centre to be run from the menu which opens when you left-click the *Start Button* on the Windows *Taskbar*. The effect is immediate and is unaffected by the checkbox **Save settings**. NB: This works by creating or deleting a shortcut to the Launch Centre in the Windows *Start Menu* directory.

Allow only one visible window, if set, will cause all other launch windows to vanish whenever one becomes visible. Clearing this checkbox is NOT recommended, for instance, if two launch windows overlap, you may accidentally reactivate one (partly or completely obscuring the other) simply by moving the mouse over it. Furthermore, if the mouse is positioned over one Launch Window when another is activated by a hotkey, the first Launch Window will be reactivated.

Move Small Windows, if set, will cause small application windows to be moved clear of the current Launch Window. This is only possible when the Task Menu is visible (and active) on the Primary Launch Window. There may be a small delay between the window opening and it being moved.

Beside this checkbox is a spin-editbox. By clicking on the arrows, you may adjust the number of movements a window makes when it is moved clear of a Launch Window. The larger the value, the slower will be the movement, but it may also appear smoother. For most Pentium and fast 486 computers, a value of eight should be appropriate but you may choose any value between 1 and 32. The default value is 4 (since there are still very many slower 486 computers in use.)

NOTES

1: Any window that is moved will always be moved so that it is located entirely within the desktop area.

2: Only application windows that appear on the Task Menu will be moved. Some applications, etc. will be ignored since the window that appears on the Task Menu is not the main window of the application. Most items that are standard to Windows will be ok, e.g. *Explorer*, *Notepad*, etc. However, most applications that have been written using Borland Delphi will be ignored. (Indeed, the *Recycle Bin Properties* Dialog may also be ignored, since, for reasons known only to Microsoft, this may be opened in such a way that it appears to belong to the Launch Centre, and therefore it will not be displayed on the Launch Centre's Task Menu unless, of course, it is opened through *Explorer*.)

3: The presence of some windows may make the movement of other windows slow and jerky. This is outside the control of the Launch Centre. For instance, a window may move

rather slowly and therefore jerkily when positioned over an *MS Word* window. Lord knows why !!!??? If you find this to be a real source of irritation, you have the choice of switching off the feature, making the movement in a single move, or maximising the Launch Window.

4: This feature is disabled a few seconds after the Launch Centre is deactivated.

Show hint for today, may be cleared once the introductory hints have become a nuisance.

Enable popup hints if cleared, will prevent any hints being given when the mouse pauses over a control. This will even disable the date display which is provided as a hint by the clock. (This setting does not affect the hints provided at the bottom of the Universal Dialog.)

Highlight Buttons if set will cause buttons to appear lowered when the mouse moves over them. (Transparent buttons will also become opaque.) This style of operation is common to newer Microsoft applications and to Internet Explorer. You may wish to clear this checkbox if you have a slow graphics card or you simply find this feature to be irritating.

Fix FindExec bug should be set unless you are able to verify that your version of Windows is able to locate associated executable files correctly on paths containing long file names that include spaces. The fix which has been implemented for this does not slow performance of the Launch Centre significantly and is not likely to cause problems on platforms where this bug is not present. To test whether this fix is needed, first clear the checkbox and click **Done**. Next, find a document which opens using an application within the *Program Files* folder or subfolder. (e.g. find *Audiolbl.pub* if you have Microsoft Publisher installed on your system.) Drag the document onto the Launch Centre to create a launch button and open its Universal Dialog page. If the application path and name are correctly displayed beneath the **Command** editbox, then it is probably safe to leave the **Fix FindExec bug** checkbox clear. NB: This bug is present in versions Win95A and 95B (aka OSR2).

Fix Open bug, should be set if launch buttons pointing to .LNK (shortcut) files fail to launch when clicked. NB: This fix opens such files with a blank operation. (Shortcuts on drop-down file menus are similarly affected.) Using Win95B, there does not appear to be a problem with .LNK files, however, virtual items may not launch correctly if this box is not ticked, e.g. items in *Control Panel*. Keep this box ticked unless a problem is discovered.

Force Print To, should be set if you wish to print certain documents by dragging them to a printer or by selecting **Print To** from its popup menu. Many applications written for Windows 95 will not need this option to be set. If this option is selected, all **Print To** operations generated by the Launch Centre are intercepted and, if necessary, the **Print** operation is substituted. When this is done, the default printer will be changed to the required printer. The default printer will be restored after a timeout. The default timeout is 20 seconds. If you have an application which takes a particularly long time to load, you may need to adjust this time. See [Windows Registry](#). It should also be noted that while the default printer is in flux, it will not be indicated by a tick next to a menu item. Furthermore, the **Print** operation from the context menu will be disabled. TECHNICAL

NOTE: The printer timeout period will not begin until any DDE conversation which was initiated has completed. Also see [Quick Questions and Answers](#).

Editbox **Taskbar Hotkey** allows you to program a hotkey for the Windows *Taskbar*. If you like to use the *Auto hide* feature of the *Taskbar*, you may like to use this option. (You may also activate the Taskbar by using the left mouse button to double-click the title bar of a Launch Window while the right mouse button is pressed.)

NB: The means by which this is implemented is unofficial and may not work in future versions of Windows.

Editboxes **Registry Editor** and **System Editor** are provided so that you may launch third party editors from the [System](#) page.

Within the **Button Creation...** groupbox are four editboxes and four checkboxes.

The editboxes determine how smoothly controls can be moved in the Launch Window and the dimensions of newly created buttons. The **Folder** editbox determines the height of folder buttons created by dragging. NB: The only recommended value for granularity is 4 !!

If a launch button is created square, then the caption will be displayed as a hint. If a launch button is created wider than high, then the caption will be displayed to the right of the icon otherwise it will be created with the caption displayed below the icon. A launch button created by dragging a folder on to the Launch Window will have a width just great enough to display the name of the folder. Its height will be determined by the **Folder** editbox (or by the font size of the Launch Window if this requires a taller launch button). It has been assumed that most launch buttons for folders will be small and rectangular but you may resize any launch button as you wish.

The checkboxes allow you to choose not to be able to delete buttons or to issue a warning before deleting buttons. They also allow you to choose to have buttons created by dragging shortcuts resolved (i.e. programmed with data read from the .LNK file).

NOTES

1: A warning will always be issued before deleting more than one button.

2: PIF files cannot be resolved since they contain much more data. An attempt to resolve a .PIF file into a launch button would be meaningless, but .PIF files may, of course, be used as command strings to launch DOS applications. See [Launch Button](#) page.

3: On most Windows installations, large icons are 32 pixels square and small icons are 16 pixels square, thus the smallest launch buttons should be either 36 pixels square or 20 pixels square since each button requires an additional four pixels as a border. However, the Launch Centre can display icons at any scale but should they be enlarged too much, they will appear very granular, furthermore, scaling to intermediate sizes can produce some distortions. Also see [Known Bugs](#).



Universal Dialog: Registration Page

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Registration status

About | Clock | File Menus | Launch Button | Launch Window | Options | Registration | System

The Launch Centre is not registered !!

C:\

License

Register by post

Register online

Hard Disk C:\

The Volume ID is ... 123110EB

The Modifier is ... 00000001

Enter your registration code

Your client limit is 1

Enter your network code

Password

Days of use remaining : 58

Accept Transfer | Transfer | Transfer to registered Launch Centre

Help | Restore Page | Cancel | Done

NOTE: This page will be omitted if the Launch Centre is registered through a network server (using the additional file **Customer.DLL**). Also see [Postal Registration](#).

Once installed, the Launch Centre must be registered, if you intend to use it beyond its evaluation period. In order to register the Launch Centre, you must know both the Volume ID of your hard disk and the Modifier number. The Volume ID is a random number stored on a disk when it is formatted. The Modifier is a number created by the Launch Centre. It will be zero initially, and will increment once whenever you transfer the registration to another computer. When you do this, registration on the current computer is invalidated.

As this help file is being written :-

- 1: The evaluation period is 60 days, after which the Launch Centre will cease to operate (other than to accept registration).
- 2: Towards the end of the evaluation period, a reminder will be displayed whenever the Launch Centre is started.
- 3: To purchase a registration number, click on the button labelled **Register by post** (or the button **Register online** if it is enabled).
- 4: The expected cost will be £10.00 in the UK. (A discount is available for schools.)
- 5: Online registration is not yet possible.

If you need to transfer the registration to another computer, click the **Transfer** button and type in the Volume ID and Modifier numbers of the new computer. Once these have been entered, click the **Transfer** button again. NB: You will need to write down the new registration

code to enter it on the new computer. When the Launch Centre is installed and running on the new computer, registration can be transferred back at any time.

IMPORTANT

1: You should write down the registration code and keep it safe. It is especially important to keep a copy of the registration code when the modifier number is zero. (Also note that if the Launch Centre is run without the file **Customer.DLL** after a network code has been entered, you will have to reenter the network code when **Customer.DLL** is restored. The network code should be found in the file **MLC_REGN.TXT**.)

2: If the Launch Centre is registered, it will automatically save some registration data to a text file called **MLC_REGN.TXT**. Normally, this file will be located in the same directory as the Launch Centre, however, if the Launch Centre is run from a drive other than a local hard disk, it will be located in the root directory of the **C:** drive.

3: If the Launch Centre registration data is obliterated, you will need to reenter the registration number. Try looking in **MLC_REGN.TXT**.

4: If you are an administrator for several computers, you should use a different password for each computer. Write down each Volume ID, and next to that, each password before entering and then write down each registration code. Each password should ideally be a random code, however, in practice, since pieces of paper get lost, why not use, say, the first word (exceeding three characters in length) of each sentence in chapter three of your favourite book. If you lose your record, at least you will know the passwords.

5: If you intend to reformat your hard disk and it is the only one installed on your computer, you will need to transfer registration temporarily to another computer. If the disk you intend to reformat contains the Windows directory, all registration data will be wiped since it is stored at the end of a system file on that disk (encrypted and without changing the file's time/date-stamp). However, if the disk you intend to reformat does not contain the Windows directory, reformatting it should not invalidate registration even if it wipes out the Launch Centre itself – simply re-install and all should be well. The reason why this is required is that reformatting a hard disk will change its Volume ID.

SUGGESTION

You should not ever need to reformat your hard disk unless you want to repartition it or change its format from FAT16 (used by Dos and old Windows) to FAT32 (used by Win95B and Windows NT). If you wish to delete all the data on it, try deleting the files instead. (N.B. If you intend to use a special utility to repartition your hard disk without erasing data, try to establish first whether it will leave at least one Volume ID unchanged. This should be sufficient to maintain registration of the Launch Centre.)

NOTES

1: It is not possible to transfer registration to a removable disk such as a Floppy, ZIP, JAZ, or LS-120 disk, nor to an optical disk such as a Panasonic PD drive. However, true hard disks which are fitted into a removable caddy can be used for registration. Furthermore, it is not possible to transfer registration to a network drive. (Indeed, the Launch Centre cannot be run on diskless nodes on a network.)

2: When this page of the Universal Dialog is open, the **Done** button must be clicked in

order to close the dialog. Other pages support the use of the *Enter* keystroke to close the dialog.



Networks and Servers

Many modern applications come in two versions. One version for use on network servers. The Maverick Launch Centre includes all necessary server functionality into a single version. Such functionality is activated by a switch which must appear on the command line that opens the Launch Centre. To use the Launch Centre on a network server (with centralised configuration) it must be opened with a command line such as **C:\....\Launch1.exe /NetServer**.

Using the **/NetServer** switch changes the key name used by the Launch Centre to store data in the windows registry. The registry key **HKEY_CURRENT_USER | MaverickLC_NET** is used. Additionally, whenever settings are saved from the Launch Window's popup menu, or when the Launch Centre is closed, this key is exported to a file called **REG_DATA** using the API function *RegSaveKey*. Whenever the Launch Centre is opened on a client computer, it will check for the existence of this file. If found, it will be imported into the registry and used to configure the Launch Centre. When the Launch Centre closes, its registry data will be deleted.

NOTE: The file **REG_DATA** will have the **Hidden**, **Read-only** and **System** attributes set. It will have no extension and it will be located in the same directory as the Launch Centre.

Question: Can the Launch Centre be registered centrally ?

Yes, but you will need an additional file called **Customer.DLL**. Each DLL file is customised and can include certain changes to the about/startup screen. For instance, you may request up to two lines of text naming your organisation in the edition box. Additionally, once the network code has been entered, you may replace the *Psycyote* logo on the about/startup screen. This is achieved by creating an image file and placing it in the same directory as the Launch Centre. See Customisations for an example.

NOTES

- 1:** You should write to the FREEPOST address given in the Postal Registration section.
- 2:** An application form is supplied as an MS Word template file called **Customer.DOT**. The initial cost will be £50 plus £7 for each client license (£5 for educational establishments) with a minimum charge of £100. (Until 1st April 1999, schools may purchase up to two server licenses with a combined client limit of 100 for just £100.00)
- 3:** Prices will be reviewed on or around 1st April 1999 or when the next major revision is released, whichever is sooner. During this introductory period, VAT will be absorbed by Cathonian Ventures (i.e. prices may be considered to be inclusive of VAT but no VAT receipts will be issued).

Question: Once I've purchased a copy of Customer.DLL, how do I use it ?

Customer.DLL must be copied to the installation directory of the Launch Centre. When it is detected, the Registration page of the Universal Dialog is modified. You will have to enter a network code to enable clients to operate with central registration. This code is unique to each computer and will be supplied with **Customer.DLL**. Once this code has been entered, you may transfer it to another installation if you so wish. Simply click the transfer button.

NOTE: The Registration page of the Universal Dialog will not be present on clients that

have been registered centrally. Therefore, any clients that have previously been registered locally should be used to transfer their registrations prior to installing **Customer.DLL**. on the server. Also see Command-line switches.

Question: I wish to install an updated version of the Launch Centre, do I need to update Customer.DLL ?

No. Whilst it is possible that updates to **Customer.DLL** will be produced to make additional features available, your existing copy will work with updated copies of the Launch Centre.

Question: Must I purchase Customer.DLL in order to configure clients centrally ?

No.

Question: Once I've installed Customer.DLL and entered the network code, can clients still be configured independantly ?

Yes. Unless the server is started using the switch **/NetServer** this will occur anyway. However, it should be understood that clients will look for the file **REG_DATA** and will not attempt to detect what state the server is in. You may still use the switch **/NetLocalRegistry** when starting a client to ensure that it is configured locally.

Question: How do I create buttons that work equally well on a server and on a client computer ?

The Launch Centre tries to behave intelligently. For instance, commands that are relative to the Windows directory are stored in relative-format (i.e. first char is '\'). This is particularly useful for folder buttons. e.g. If Windows is installed on drive **C:** on the server, and drive **D:** on a client, commands referring to items in the Windows directory of the server (*C:\Windows...*) will be translated on the client (to *D:\Windows...*). In fact, this is true whether or not the Launch Centre is operating in Client/Server modes. However, when in Client or Server modes, the Launch Centre treats the directories **Windows**, **System** and **Temp** (and some others) as special cases so that buttons referring to these directories on the Server will refer to the equivalent directories on the Client.

For non-folder buttons, often it will simply be necessary to use the file name as a command rather than its full specification. e.g. use *Notepad.Exe* as a command rather than *C:\Windows\Notepad.Exe*. You may also use UNC names to files on the server. e.g. use *\\Onion\c\Kitchen\CookBook.Exe* as the command for a launch button rather than *C:\Kitchen\CookBook.Exe* where *Onion* is the name of the server. However, if you do this, the Launch Centre may slow down dramatically if the server goes offline.

NOTE: If clients are likely to be running a different version of Windows than the server, you should not create buttons on the server that refer to items in virtual folders. Such buttons may misbehave on the clients. e.g. If the server is running Win95B and some clients are likely to be running 95A, do not create a button to *Control Panel | Mouse*. In fact, the Launch Centre will normally detect invalid buttons, issue a warning, and colour the buttons opaque red.

Question: Are there any special considerations required for alarms ?

Servers: Alarm data should be saved and all registry data exported at the end of each day. This will always occur when the Launch Centre is closed even if other settings are not

saved. However, it will also occur at midnight if the checkbox labelled **Save at midnight** is set on the clock page of the Universal Dialog. This checkbox is only visible when the switch **/NetServer** is used.

Clients: Alarm data may be loaded from the server. Alarms may be added or deleted on local computers but unless the switch **/NetLocalRegistry** is used, changes will be discarded when the Launch Centre is closed.

In a network environment, the best use for alarms may be to issue reminders to people. e.g. in a school, you might set up a daily alarm on Monday that reads “Don't forget the Physics test on Friday.” This would be displayed whenever the Launch Centre is started. In this example, someone would have to remember to delete the alarm on Friday, however, bear in mind that alarms can be set up days, weeks or months in advance.

Question: Can I set up one configuration for clients and another for the server ?

Yes, but if alarms are required on the clients you may need to run two copies of the Launch Centre simultaneously. The first copy should require no switches. It will supply the local configuration for the server. The second copy should be loaded using the switches **/m** **/NetServer**. It will supply the configuration for the clients. In order that the two copies are not confused, you may wish to switch off the rainbow border on the first copy.

NOTES:

1: Each copy will appear on the task menu of the other.

2: The title displayed on the Windows Taskbar will be **Launch Server** for the second copy.

Question : How is data imported into the Registry

When the Launch Centre is opened on a local computer, the data is loaded into the key **HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE | MaverickLC** using the API function *RegLoadKey*. When the Launch Centre closes, the data is deleted using the API function *RegUnloadKey*. The data is volatile, that is to say that it is simply kept in memory. Should the computer crash, the data will not be present in the registry when the computer is restarted because it is never actually saved.

Question: Why not connect directly to the registry on the server

This would be sensible, however, Windows does not seem to support the concept of read-only access to a remote registry. Therefore, each client computer would have to be given administration rights to the server. Additionally, the Windows Registration Server (a utility on the Windows CD) would also have to be installed and this requires that all access control be at **User-level** rather than **Share-level**. In other words, it is far simpler to temporarily import a file into the local registry rather than to connect directly to the registry on the server !!!

Question: Can each client computer configure the Launch Centre locally ?

Yes: Use the command line switch **/NetLocalRegistry** when opening the Launch Centre on the client computer. In any case, this will occur if the file **REG_DATA** does not exist on the server. (This file is created when the Launch Centre is run with the **/NetServer** switch.)

Question: Can each client computer be configured for several users ?

Yes: You may use the command-line switch **/UserName**. For instance, if the current user name is Sarah, the Launch Centre will load and save settings to the key

HKEY_CURRENT_USER | MaverickLC_Sarah.

NB: You should only use this switch if all users share common desktop settings, etc. If each user enjoys separate settings, using this switch is unnecessary. (See *Control Panel | Passwords | User Profiles.*)

Question. Can I navigate around the network using file menus ?

Yes. If a network was detected when the Launch Centre was installed, there should be a folder button titled *Network Neighborhood*. If this is not present, double-click an empty area of the Launch Window (or the Task Menu). A drop-down view of the desktop should open. Simply drag the folder *Network Neighborhood* to an empty area of the Launch Window (or the title bar).

NB: When viewing a folder on a remote computer, the border colour of the file menu will be mixed with blue. i.e. most folders will be displayed with a cyan border, but hidden or system folders will be displayed with a magenta border.

Question. Can I launch items located on remote computers using Launch Buttons ?

Yes. Simply create the launch button by dragging the file item to an empty area of the Launch Window (or the title bar).

NB: Launch Buttons that refer to items on other computers should do so via shortcuts. This will be handled automatically by the Launch Centre when launch buttons are created by dragging. If this rule is not adhered to, certain Launch Centre operations such as the automatic arrangement of buttons will virtually grind to a halt if the link to the remote computer is broken. This problem may be overcome in future versions of the Launch Centre.

Question: Can I cause a program to start and run on a remote computer ?

No. (Not by using the Launch Centre anyway.)



File Management

The Launch Centre is quite capable in the area of file management, but it is not intended to be a replacement for Windows *Explorer*. Indeed, you may wish to have a launch button set up to open *Explorer*, but in any case, wherever a folder is to be found in the Launch Centre, *Explorer* can be opened by using the right mouse button to open a popup menu.

Having said that the Launch Centre is not intended to replace *Explorer*, depending on what uses your computer is put, it may be possible to greatly reduce the number of times that you have to open *Explorer*. Certainly, if you choose to keep your Windows Desktop area clear, by placing launch buttons to folders and applications on the Launch Centre, you can still have quick access to whatever you require without having to use *Explorer*, open folders, or trudge through endless menus from the *Start* button. Indeed, achieving quick access to applications, folders and documents is the prime function of the Launch Centre.

Drop-down File Menus



Any launch button which has a folder name as its Command, can be used to display a drop-down menu of files. Simply clear the **Explorer** checkbox after opening the Launch Button page of the Universal Dialog. Above is a snapshot of a typical drop-down file menu.

NOTES

- 1:** Filename extensions are placed in a column to the right of the filenames and are always displayed in UPPER case.
- 2:** Files are sorted first by extension and then by name, however, folders are placed at the top of the menu. (In fact, the complete sort order is Folder, Virtual, LinkToFolder, LinkToVirtual, LinkToDrive, Directory, LinkToDirectory, LinkMissing, FileItem, where a "Folder" is defined to be virtual e.g. *My Computer* or *Control Panel* and a "Virtual" is a non-filing-system item in a virtual folder e.g. *Inbox* in the *Desktop* folder).
- 3:** Shortcuts are displayed with the extensions .LNK or .PIF. These extensions are normally hidden by Windows Explorer. (You can choose to hide these extensions on the File Menus page of the Universal Dialog.)
- 4:** The border is green. A red border signifies that the folder is either either hidden or a system folder. (All folders and files are visible on drop-down menus.)
- 5:** The choice of colours may be programmed through the File Menus page of the Universal Dialog. (NB: A blue border signifies that the folder is *virtual* e.g. *My Computer* or *Control Panel*. If the directory is located on a network, the border colour will be mixed with blue e.g. a hidden folder on a network drive will have a magenta border.)

6: A dark grey bar indicates which item on the menu is selected. The bar follows movements of the mouse. A red bar, or red text, indicates that the item is either hidden or a system component. (or, if a shortcut, the target has been moved deleted or renamed.)

7: It is possible to drag an item onto a launch button, onto the Launch Window, or onto certain other files and folders in the same file menu or on other file menus, but it is not possible to drag an item out of the Launch Centre into another application such as *Explorer*. Nor is it possible to drag an item from *Explorer* onto an individual item in a drop-down file menu. This omission is deliberate since it would be too easy to make mistakes. This feature will be made available in future versions when the drag and drop system is revised. Currently, any attempt to drag a file from *Explorer* to a file menu will result in the File Move popup menu being displayed for the parent folder.

8: It is possible to launch applications and open documents from a file-menu. Simply click on the required item. Clicking on a folder (or a shortcut to a folder) will open that folder as a file-menu.

9: Right-clicking on an item will open a popup menu.

10: If an item is launched from its popup menu, the file menu (snapshot above) will remain open. However, if an item is launched from a file menu by clicking on it, the file menu may close automatically depending on the checkbox **Close on launch** located on the File Menus page of the Universal Dialog.

10: Double-clicking the title panel at the top of the menu will cause the original menu to be loaded. The primary use of this feature is to return to the original folder after clicking on a shortcut to another folder.

11: It is possible to filter the files displayed so that, for instance, only files of type *.exe* and *.com* are displayed. (See the Launch Button of the Universal Dialog.) This is achieved by placing a file mask in the **Working Directory** editbox, e.g. **.EXE; *.COM* (The **Working Directory** editbox will be relabelled **Show files of type**.)

12: You may select several files to operate on. Press the *Control* key and click each item to select several files, or press the *Shift* key and click the start and end of a group of files.

13: You may open several files at once by selecting them and pressing the *Enter* key provided that the highlighted item is one of those selected. Also see Known Bugs.

Drag & Drop

Also see Resizing and Moving Controls in the Launch Window

When dragging items within the Launch Centre (from drop-down file menus), sophisticated visual feedback is provided, but only “old-fashioned” drag & drop is supported when dragging items from outside the Launch Centre onto the Launch Window. (i.e. Win3.x style : without the sophisticated visual feedback of Win95.) You may drag items onto the Launch Window and onto launch buttons. (Files are dragged by pressing and keeping pressed the left mouse button, and then moving the mouse. The right mouse button may be used to drag items into the Launch Centre from *Explorer*, but currently only the left mouse button may be used for dragging files within the Launch Centre.)

Dragging a file onto the the Launch Window will cause a launch button to be created. If the file is a link (shortcut with extension *.LNK*) then it may be possible to resolve the link as it is

dragged onto the window. In this case, the launch button will be programmed using information stored within the link file. (See the Options page of the Universal Dialog.) Dragging a file onto a launch button may have two effects depending upon the launch button settings.

- 1: If the launch button points to a directory then a popup menu will appear. You may choose to copy or move the file to the directory (or, indeed, create a shortcut).
- 2: If the launch button points to an application, the application will be launched with the filename passed to it as a command-line parameter. i.e. if you drag a document file onto a launch button that points to a wordprocessor, then the wordprocessor will open the document.

NOTES

1: If the **Parameters** editbox of a launch button dialog contains information such as command line switches, these will be passed **AFTER** any parameters created by dragging a file onto a launch button unless the checkbox **Place dropped files last** is set (See Launch Button page of the Universal Dialog). A few applications may require parameter data to be supplied in this order.

2: It is not possible to drag files out of the Launch Centre into other applications such as *Explorer*.

3: Certain virtual folders are recognised as having special significance in drag and drop operations. You may drag to the *Recycle Bin* to delete an item. You may drag to the *Printers* folder to print a document on the default printer or you can drag to an individual printer (e.g. to send a fax).

LIMITATION:

Certain folders in Windows 95 are said to be *virtual*. That is to say that they do not exist as directories on a disk drive. The *Control Panel* and *My Computer* are two such folders. It is not yet possible to drag items in such folders from *Explorer* into the Launch Centre. However, items in virtual folders can be dragged from drop-down file menus into the Launch Window. Future versions of the Launch Centre will extend drag & drop capabilities.

If you wish to select multiple files and/or directories for copying, you may use the shift and control keys to select multiple items by left-clicking on them. You may also wish to use the **Edit** submenu on a file's popup menu. Broadly, these features work in the same manner as *Explorer*.



Internet Explorer

The following points apply to Microsoft *Internet Explorer 4*. Some points may also apply to other versions of *Internet Explorer*. They may also apply should you upgrade Windows, e.g. from 95A to 95B or perhaps Windows 98, etc. Also bear in mind that *Internet Explorer* is continuously under development by Microsoft. Certain problems mentioned below may have been cured since this help file was written.

Some Launch Buttons may become Invalid.

If *Internet Explorer* is installed (or Windows is upgraded) **after** installing the Launch Centre, some corrections may have to be made. (Similarly if *IE4* is uninstalled.) Buttons that have virtual commands, typically **Recycle Bin**, **My Computer**, **Network Neighbourhood**, **Control Panel** and **Printers** could fail to work correctly. In fact, problems with such buttons will be detected automatically and corrections will be made. A message will be displayed to this effect. However, buttons to other virtual items and folders cannot be corrected automatically. Such buttons must be deleted and recreated. The process that corrects the standard buttons will ensure that other invalid buttons are coloured opaque red.

WARNING: If none of the standard buttons mentioned above is present in the Launch Centre, automatic detection of this problem will fail. So if you delete these standard buttons that are created automatically, you must be aware that buttons with virtual commands (displayed in the colour **blue** in the dialog rather than black) may become invalid if Windows is upgraded.

Buttons that become invalid must be deleted and recreated.

NB: Even if the launch buttons appear to work correctly, you are still advised to delete and recreate them since the problems you may otherwise encounter may be quite subtle.

MISCELLANEOUS

When *IE4* is installed, the Launch Centre may take longer to start up. For some reason, access to binary data in the Registry is super-slow. Most data is now stored in string form. This can be read quickly from the Registry even when *IE4* is installed.

ADDENDUM: This problem seems to have been fixed in the latest edition of *IE4*.

IE4 may set your preferences to drag full windows as opposed to dragging window outlines. This used to cause a problem when Launch Windows are set to automatically snap to an edge, but this has now been fixed. However, behaviour may be a little odd when an application window is moved or resized so that it overlaps the last active Launch Window (assuming that the Task Menu is visible and the checkbox **Move Small Windows** is ticked. See the [Launch Window](#) page of Universal dialog.)

When *IE4* is installed, accessing the Windows *Recycle Bin* can be painfully slow. This is outside the control of the Launch Centre. Interestingly though, the property sheet for the *Recycle Bin* behaves normally (i.e. like any other property sheet). This has not previously been the case.

ADDENDUM: This problem seems to have been fixed in the latest edition of *IE4*.

When *IE4* is installed, certain small icons can be lost.

ADDENDUM: This problem appears to be caused by the Windows API function

SHGetFileInfo failing to return icons correctly for hidden files. (It may even be a deliberate change by Microsoft.) A patch has been implemented to restrict the problem to hidden files by ensuring that icons are only cached for non-hidden files. (Hidden files are always displayed, but by default, they are displayed in the colour red.)

When *IE4* is installed, the default printer is denoted by an icon overlay (a white tick in a black circle). If you create launch buttons for printers, when the default printer changes, this will not be reflected immediately in the icons used by printer buttons unless the instruction to change the default printer was issued from the Launch Centre (e.g. from a popup menu). This problem is being studied and a solution is likely in a future release. However, it may not be possible to fix this under Windows 95 since the API functions *FindFirst/NextPrinterChangeNotification* are implemented under Windows NT but not under Windows 95. (It is quite possible that these functions would not provide a solution anyway since they do not appear to have the capability to monitor changes to the default printer assignment.)

When *IE4* is installed and you have a 256 colour display set up, the palette switching performed by Windows may be faulty. This may cause some Launch buttons to be displayed incorrectly. Backgrounds may also be displayed incorrectly although a fix has now been implemented to partially fix this problem.

When *IE4* is installed, some drop-down file menus may be slower to open. This sometimes occurs when there are invalid shortcuts located in the folder. You should either resolve the shortcuts (just right-click on them) or delete them. Such shortcuts will be coloured red by default.

SUGGESTION

After installing *IE4*, you may wish to create a launch button to the *Favourites* folder. To do this, click on the Windows folder button to open a drop-down view of the Windows directory. Next, drag the *Favourites* folder to an empty area of the Launch Window (or its title bar). You may similarly create buttons to folders within the *Favourites* folder. You may even drag .URL files to create buttons to open particularly favourite internet sites.

INTEGRATION

This version of the Launch Centre should be considered “Internet Explorer Aware”. The Launch Centre is fundamentally designed for use in launching applications and opening documents. Future versions of the Launch Centre will include enhanced internet capabilities.



Universal Dialog: Introduction & About Page

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The Universal Dialog is a multi-page dialog box through which all adjustments to settings must be made. Below the selectable pages four buttons are to be found :-

- 1: Help** will open this help file at the appropriate place. You may also press the function key F1.
- 2: Restore Page** does not close the dialog. It simply restores any settings which have been changed on the current page. Settings that have changed on other pages will not be restored.
- 3: Cancel** will close the dialog and restore any settings which have been changed to their previous values. (If an additional data screen is displayed over the standard page, clicking the **Cancel** button, or pressing the **Escape** key will cause the overlay screen to be destroyed.)
- 4: Done** will close the dialog and save or keep any changes that have been made.

NOTES

- 1:** Some pages may be used to display further screens. The screen's name will be displayed in the title bar.
- 2:** The snapshots of the Universal Dialog which are included in this help file should be taken as a guide only. Appearances can change under different conditions and subsequent developments to the Launch Centre may result in some revisions being made to the layouts after the writing of this help file.
- 3:** If you wish to browse through the help on all pages, either press the “ > ” key or click the **>>** button next to the **Print** button at the top of this screen.

The About Page

This page (shown above) provides the same information as the startup screen.

The text in the panel which reads “public edition...” is likely to vary. Customised variations for companies, etc. will contain the company name here. Copies provided for review, etc. will read something like “PC Mag Review Edition”. If your own name appears here, consider yourself highly privileged.

NOTES

1: Although the the Launch Centre is British, the flag may be changed to denote the version. e.g. a US edition may have Stars and Stripes here. (There is likely to be very little difference between editions, but instructions for registration may differ.) Other logos may be placed here depending on deals struck with distributors.

2: From this page of the Universal Dialog a secret page can be accessed which will allow you to change its colour scheme. Shhhhhh !!!!

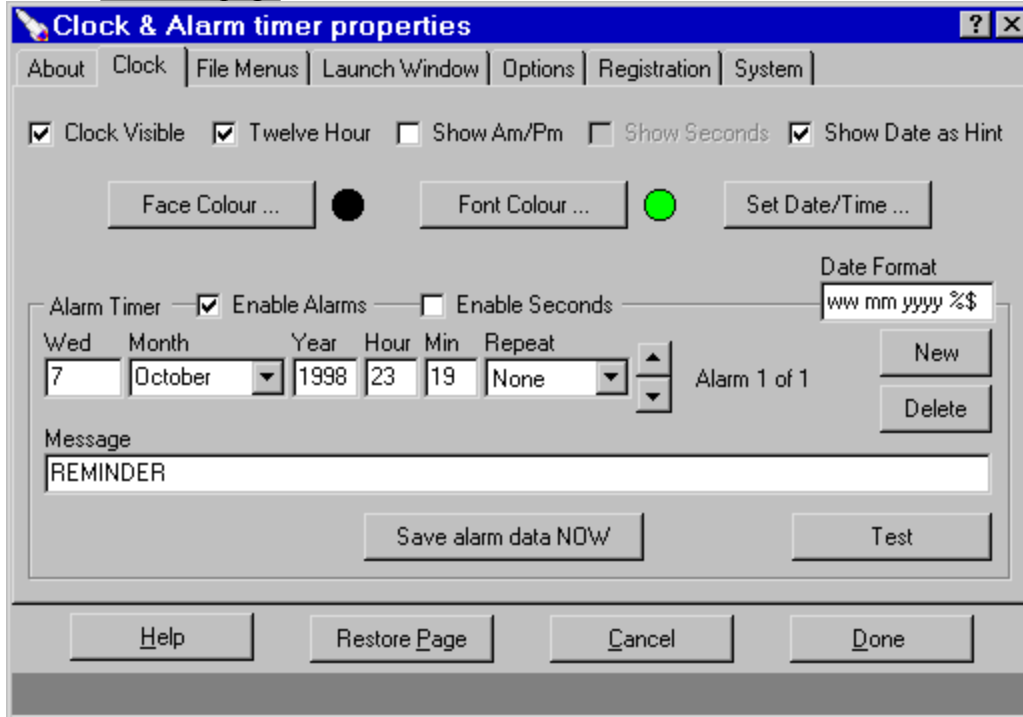
3: Also see PSCYGOTE and Customisations.



Universal Dialog: Clock Page

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NB: This page will not be visible if no clock has been created for the Launch Window.

The check boxes at the top of the dialog page are all self explanatory. The three buttons below them launch standard dialogs to adjust the display colours of the clock and also set the time.

However many Launch Windows are created, only one timer will ever be created. This timer will have an interval of either one second or one minute. If you wish to display seconds on any clock, the alarm timer must have an interval of one second. This is achieved by placing a tick in the checkbox labelled **Enable Seconds**.

The format used by the Launch Centre to display dates can be adjusted using the **Date Format** editbox as follows:-

w	: short weekday e.g. <i>Fri</i> . If present, weekday is displayed first.
ww	: long weekday e.g. <i>Friday</i> .
m	: short month. (this is the default.)
mm	: long month e.g. <i>September</i> rather than <i>Sep</i> .
mn	: shortened month e.g. <i>Sept</i> or <i>July</i> rather than <i>Sep</i> or <i>Jul</i> .
	: (Up to four letters are used. Language is always English)
y or yy	: short year e.g. <i>98</i> . If present, year is displayed last.
yyy or yyyy	: long year e.g. <i>1998</i> .
\$: US format i.e. Month/Date rather than Date/Month.
%	: Posh. e.g. <i>12th September</i> rather than <i>12 September</i> .
short	: short date format e.g. <i>06/07/98</i> . All symbols other than \$ are ignored.
long	: long date format as supplied by Windows. All other symbols are ignored.

NOTES

- 1:** The order in which symbols appear is irrelevant.
- 2:** As the format is typed, its effect on today's date will appear in the title of the dialog box.
- 3:** The date format is stored as part of the *Alarm* data rather than as part of the *Clock* data or *Option* data.
- 4:** If the long date format used by Windows changes while the Launch Centre is open, this will not be reflected until the Launch Centre is restarted.

The Alarm Timer

Before programming alarms it must be noted that the **Enable Alarms** checkbox must be set.

The **New** button allows new alarms to be created and the **Delete** button will delete an alarm. When a new alarm is created, it will be set to go off after exactly one hour.

The **Up/Down** buttons allow individual alarms to be selected.

The row of edit boxes allow the time and date of the first occurrence of the alarm to be programmed together with how often the alarm is to be repeated. Alarms may be repeated hourly, daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly or yearly. NB: If a monthly alarm is set to trigger on the 31st day, but the next month has only 30 days, the alarm will trigger on the 30th day. If the subsequent month has 31 days, the alarm will again trigger on the 31st day. If you wish to set an alarm to always trigger on the last day of a month, but you wish it to start in a Leap February, enter "29/31" for the day. The first two digits are the actual day of the next alarm, and the digits which follow the / are the day on which the alarm should trigger in subsequent months.

When an alarm occurs, a message box will be displayed using data entered in the **Message** editbox. Each alarm has its own message but a default is provided when new alarms are created. You will have to press the return key or click the OK button when the alarm occurs. However, you will be returned to the window in which you were working before the alarm occurred. (This should even work if you were previously in a full-screen DOS window, e.g. playing a game. However, this seems to require some slightly bizarre code to implement, so it may not be 100% reliable, in this case, you will have to reactivate the task manually.)

When the Launch Centre starts, it will check for missed alarms. If an alarm was set to go off while the Launch Centre was not running, it will be displayed. The exception to this is that hourly alarms will not be triggered. This could result in, say, an alarm set to go off every Tuesday at 10.00 am actually going off on Wednesday at 8.45 am, if the Launch Centre was not run on Tuesday. Depending on its use, this may be sensible or completely absurd, but if absurd, all you have to do is click the OK button !!

NOTES

- 1:** The alarm information will always be the same, whichever Launch Window was used to open the dialog, however, if a Launch Window does not create a clock, this page of the Universal Dialog will not be present. See the Launch Window page.
- 2:** The Primary Launch Window (the only one most people will ever use) will always create a clock.

3: Unless seconds are enabled, the clock may appear to be up to a minute slow since the timer that drives the clock display will be set to minimize CPU load. However, if you use the Task Menu (on the Primary Launch Window) there is nothing to be gained by having seconds disabled.



Has the world has gone mad ?

An irrelevant thought from the author

BSE (aka Mad Cow Disease) apparently started as a result of feeding sheep remains to cattle. Therefore it must seem rather odd to most people that restrictions on beef products are tighter than those on lamb products. However, did HM Government break new ground with respect to stupidity at the end of 1997 when it introduced a ban on “beef on the bone” ?

Beef on the bone has been banned because consumers might eat some nerve tissue attached to bones. Seems almost sensible when taken in isolation !! However, if such tissue is considered potentially hazardous to human health, two questions must be asked :-

1. Are such tissues still allowed into the human food chain directly in the form of mechanically separated beef found in sausages, burgers, etc... etc..???
2. Are such tissues still allowed into the human food chain indirectly via feeds given to other animals such as poultry or even farmed fish?

Even if a species is totally unaffected by the BSE agent, that does not mean that it cannot act as a carrier of the disease. Unless it can be proven that a species cannot transmit the disease, logically it must be assumed that it might.

Of course logic is a rare commodity in governments (perhaps because politicians with science or engineering degrees are so very rare) but how could such questions be missed by all the journalists, opposition politicians, and consumer organisations that plague us? Or has mechanically separated beef been banned altogether from the human food chain? If it has, it happened very quietly !!

Some products now state on the labelling that they do not contain any mechanically separated beef but if it is still allowed into the human food chain by any means whatsoever, the associated risks, however small, are probably hundreds, if not thousands of times greater than eating, say, beef ribs or T-Bone steaks

Jim Turner B.Sc., Omnivore, July 1998

PS

Man has been eating meat for millions of years whereas cattle have been vegetarian for millions of years. Man, therefore, is rather more likely to be resistant to contaminated beef than cattle are to be resistant to contaminated lamb. In other words, don't panic!!



Quick Questions and Answers

When does the Launch Centre save settings?

Changes to the configuration of the Launch Centre will only be saved automatically when you close it down. Therefore, if you make changes to the configuration you may wish to save settings immediately. To do this, right-click an empty area of the Launch Window, or its titlebar, and choose **Save Options & Window Settings** from the popup menu.

NOTES

- 1:** If you make changes but wait for them to be saved automatically, a system-wide crash will prevent settings being saved at all !!
- 2:** Settings are not saved immediately whenever they change since this would slow things down terribly. Automatic saving at specified time intervals is under consideration and may be added in the future.
- 3:** This popup menu command will save settings for all Launch Windows if you have defined several windows.

How do I open the Universal Dialog ?

Use the right mouse button to double-click on a button, on the clock, on an empty area of the Launch Window, or even its Title Bar. The Universal Dialog will open at an appropriate page but you can choose any other page you wish.

What does *My Computer* signify ?

My Computer is an item on the Desktop. Some manufacturers of computers rename this item. For instance, if your computer was supplied by Packard Bell, the item normally called *My Computer* may be called *Packard Bell*. While *My Computer* may not be the most imaginative name, it is the name that Windows expects to be used in its own help files. Using any other name is likely to cause confusion.

When the Launch Centre runs and detects no launch buttons (e.g. when it is first installed) several buttons are normally created automatically. The leftmost folder button will be the *My Computer* button. If this button is absent and you wish to create it, simply left double-click an empty area of the Launch Window. A drop-down view of the items on the Windows Desktop should open. Drag the *My Computer* item onto an empty area of the Launch Window.

I've created a launch button by dragging, but when I click it, it doesn't Launch as I would expect. Why ?

The problem probably lies with the **Operation** used by the button. Open the button's dialog by using the right mouse button to double click it. Delete the **Operation** so that this editbox is blank. Finally, click the button labelled **Done** and then try clicking the launch button again.

This problem arises since the default operation for some file types is not *Open*. When a blank operation is used, the Launch Centre looks up the default operation in the Windows Registry before calling the API function *ShellExecuteEx*.

Why can't I move or resize the launch buttons or the clock ?

Press the Control key (usually below the Shift key on most keyboards) and drag with the

mouse. If this doesn't work, someone has probably fiddled with the **Granularity** setting on the Options page of the Universal Dialog. Choose a value of 4.

When controls are automatically arranged, they are too large. Why ?

Check the Options page on the Universal Dialog. Choose a granularity setting of 4. The recommended setting for other values are as follows.

Width 36 or 40, Height 36 or 40, Folder 20. You may wish to change width and height to 20. This will cause all buttons to be created with small icons. If you set height greater than width, buttons will be created with a caption below the icon. If you set width greater than height, then buttons will be created with a caption to the right of the icon. However, caption positions will never be changed when buttons are arranged automatically. If the height and width are identical then the button will be created with the caption displayed as a hint. In this case, these values should be set to 36 in order to display a large icon or 20 to display a small icon.

Can I create launch buttons for particular printers ?

Yes. Well behaved applications written for Windows 95 should allow you to drag their associated documents to individual printers. Normally this would be done by opening the *Printers* folder and dragging the document onto the desired printer. Having the Launch Centre loaded does not prevent this method being used, but you may prefer to set up launch buttons to act as drop points for printers. To do this you may proceed as follows :-

- 1: Create a new launch button
- 2: Choose the **Operation** *PrintTo*.
- 3: Enter the name of the printer, within double quotes, in the **Parameters** editbox.
- 4: Place a tick in the checkbox **Special Operation**.

You should now be able to drag documents to the printer but you should also choose an icon and a caption for the launch button.

ALTERNATIVE: The method above should still work, (and may allow several documents to be printed in one operation) but the recommended way now to create a printer button is to open *My Computer* (drop-down file menu) locate a printer and drag it onto the launch window. Much simpler !!!!!

The same methods can be used to create a button to the Recycle Bin (choose **Special Operation** *Delete* or create by dragging). A launch button pointing to the *Printers* folder can be used as a drop target for the default printer. Also see Options and Windows Registry.

Can I create launch buttons to individual Screen Savers ?

Yes. Screen savers are really executable files. They will normally be located in the *Windows\System* directory and will have the filename extension .SCR To create a launch button to a screen saver, you simply need to locate it and drag it onto the Launch Window. (And if you then right-click the new button, you should find the context items *Test*, *Configure* and *Install* but that will depend on your Windows installation.)

POINT OF INTEREST: Virus scanning programs often ignore .SCR files by default. If you are worried about virus infections, you should check that these files are included in a list of those types which should always be scanned. (.SCR files will not be excluded from complete

scans which include all files.)

[Can I launch several files from a single Launch Button ?](#)

Yes. See the [Launch Button](#) page of the Universal Dialog.

[Can I launch files automatically whenever the Launch Centre opens ?](#)

Yes. You will need to create a directory called Startup. This directory must be placed in Launch Centre's directory. Also see the [Launch Button](#) page of the Universal Dialog.

[The Launch Centre appears to have partially locked up. Have I done something wrong ?](#)

When an application is launched, it may initiate a so-called DDE conversation. This conversation must complete before other applications can be launched. The most likely cause is that you have launched an application with a **Print** or **Print To** command and the application requires you to enter information to complete the task. You will have to either complete or cancel the operation before the Launch Centre becomes fully responsive again.

NB: If you attempt to close the Launch Centre, it may appear to become fully responsive again, but you are strongly recommended to close down the DDE task immediately. If necessary, press Control-Alt-Delete to bring up the *Windows Close Program* dialog and forcibly close the task.

This restriction on launching applications is provided for security. It may be lifted in future releases of the Launch Centre, however, it is currently vital to the operation of swapping the Default Printer (using the **Print To** operation with the **Force Print To** option) and is unlikely to be lifted for this operation..

ADDENDUM: Opening the property sheet for the Recycle Bin may cause the Launch Centre to partially lock up. This is perfectly safe. The Launch Centre will become fully responsive when the property sheet is closed. It is entirely possible that other property sheets, etc. will behave in the same way, though as this helpfile is being written, no others are known to do so. While in this state, it may be impossible to open and/or close or navigate drop-down-down file menus. If you attempt to launch an application, the property sheet should become focussed. (However the method used to achieve this depends on Windows behaving consistently, which is about as likely as Elvis being found alive and well on planet Mars, but you never know !!!)

If you close the Launch Centre while the property sheet is open, the property sheet should also close.

[How do I copy my Desktop shortcuts to the Launch Window ?](#)

Drag them. (You can also view the *Desktop* by double-clicking on an empty area of the Launch Window and you can drag items from there.)

[I've finished copying my Desktop shortcuts to the Launch Window, should I delete them](#)

from the Desktop now ?

NO !! There is nothing to be gained by deleting shortcuts from the Desktop and launch buttons which refer to the Desktop shortcuts may cease to operate. (In fact, the Launch Centre will attempt to create copies of shortcuts so that if the original is deleted, the Launch Button which was created from it will continue to operate.) If you do wish to delete a shortcut, test its equivalent item on the Launch Window afterwards. If it fails to work restore the shortcut from the Recycle Bin.

NB: Launch buttons which refer to .LNK files can be resolved thereby bypassing the .LNK file. Launch buttons which refer to .PIF files cannot be resolved. To resolve a shortcut of type .LNK, right-click the launch button, and choose **Resolve Link** from its popup menu.

Phylosophical point : If you own a bicycle and someone gives you a motorcycle, would you then throw away the bicycle? "Murphy's Law" suggests that if you do, the motorcycle is bound to go wrong and you'll be left stranded. Although considerable effort has gone into making sure that the Launch Centre is well-behaved, you may nevertheless suspect it of being the cause if your computer starts to misbehave. You should, therefore, keep your Desktop shortcuts so that you can run your computer for a day or two without the Launch Centre. In this way, hopefully, the Launch Centre will be cleared of blame.

Why can I drag some items into the Launch Window and not others ?

Some items on the *Desktop* (and in folders such as *Control Panel*) cannot be dragged directly into the Launch Window. Such items are not directly representative of items on your hard disk. Such items are said to be *virtual*. You can drag such items into the Launch Window but only from drop-down file menus. To open a dropdown view of the *Windows Desktop*, double-click an empty area of the Launch Window.

How do I get rid of the rectangle at the corner or edge of the screen ?

That little rectangle, is called the remnant. It's there to make the Launch Window magically reappear. The remnant will be located at the edge of the screen. If the Launch Window is wider than high (recommended), it will be located on either the top or bottom edge aligned with either the left or right edges of the Launch Window. You may choose any colour for the remnant if you don't like its default of red. If you absolutely must be rid of the remnant, click the **Remnant | Position | Off** radio button on the Launch Window page of the Universal Dialog. However, if you simply wish to move the remnant, open the Launch Window's dialog, choose **Remnant | Position | Top / Left** (or **Bottom / Right**) and click the arrow buttons until the desired position is achieved.

The remnant has vanished. Now what do I do ?

Probably, the Launch Centre has been minimized. This will remove the remnant from the screen. Either try pressing the Launch Window's hotkey (default is F12) or right-click on the Launch Centre's Taskbutton on the Windows Taskbar and choose **Restore** from the popup menu. You may also wish to check the position of the remnant on the Launch Window page of the Universal Dialog. (Other possibilities include the monitor being badly adjusted so that the edge/corner of the screen is not displayed, or perhaps your graphics card is using a scrolling viewport. This method is used to display a larger desktop area than the monitor can cope with. Frankly, such a feature is 99% useless and should not be used without good reason.)

ADDENDUM: Application bars (esp. the MS Office toolbar) can

occasionally obscure the remnant.

[When I move the mouse to the *File* menu of an application, I often activate the Launch Centre accidentally. Is there a solution ?](#)

There are three ways to overcome this. All require you to open the Launch Window page of the Universal Dialog. (Right-click the title bar of the Launch Window and choose **Open Dialog**.) Look in the **Remnant** groupbox.

1: Choose **Position | Off**. In this case, you must reactivate the Launch Window using a hotkey.

2: Choose **Position | Top / Left** or **Bottom / Right** and move the remnant using the arrow buttons.

3: Enter a hint. In this case, you will have to click the remnant to activate its Launch Window.

[I want to completely rearrange the launch buttons but dragging them around individually is a real pain in the neck. Help ??!](#)

First make the Launch Window larger (see below). Next, press the left mouse button and move the mouse diagonally. After the mouse has moved a short distance, the Launch Centre will realise what you wish to do and start drawing a “rubber rectangle”. When you release the mouse button, all the launch buttons that were covered (even partially) by the rubber rectangle will be highlighted to indicate that they have been selected and a popup menu will appear. You may begin to drag them immediately, ignoring the menu, but if you wish to cancel the operation you **MUST** choose **Cancel** from the popup menu before dragging. When you have finished, choose **Shrink Wrap** from the Launch Window's popup menu. Alternatively, try using **Auto Arrange** from the Launch Window's popup menu.

[I've dragged several buttons roughly where I want them and chosen AutoArrange to tidy up but it didn't do what I wanted. Why?](#)

Bear in mind that when buttons are arranged automatically, they are sorted by height and then by position. Therefore, you may also need to change the caption position of the buttons you are trying to move. For a single button, open its dialog. For several buttons, drag out a rubber rectangle and choose a new caption position from the resulting popup menu.

[Why can't I resize the Launch Window ?](#)

You can, but only if its **Border Style** is *Sizeable*. Use the right mouse button to double-click an empty area of the Launch Window or the Title Bar. The Universal Dialog will open at the required page so that you can change the border style. (You may have to temporarily clear the checkbox labelled **Show Task Menu**, otherwise, the **Border Style** editbox may be disabled.) You may also need to clear the checkbox **Auto Arrange**. If this is ticked, whenever the Launch Window is resized, the controls will be rearranged and the Launch Window borders pulled in as far as possible. Priority is given to maintaining the chosen width of the Launch Window.

[Can I get rid of those irritating little *shortcut* arrows from my launch buttons. ?](#)

Of course you can !! Simply right-click on the launch button and choose **Resolve** or **Resolve Icon**. Resolve will completely reprogram the launch button with data read from the .LNK file indicated by the **Command**. Shortcuts to MSDos programs use the extension .PIF.

These cannot be fully resolved but choosing **Resolve Icon** will get rid of the shortcut arrow. (If you look at the Options page of the Universal Dialog, you will find that you can resolve .LNK files when they are dragged onto the Launch Window automatically.)

NOTES

1: You should not resolve shortcuts to items on other computers that use UNC names. Such names will start with a double backslash e.g. \\Jimbo\C\Windows\notepad.exe, where *Jimbo* is the name of a computer on the network.

2: Certain file types are displayed with a shortcut arrow when default icons are used. This is determined by settings in the Windows Registry. For instance, .URL files are typically displayed using a shortcut arrow to denote that the item will open an internet site. Currently, the Launch Centre does not remove such arrows.

How do I open a folder button with Explorer ?

Right click the launch button. A popup menu will appear. Choose **Open** for a one-pane view. Choose **Explore** for a two-pane view. You may also choose this to be the default action when clicking on the button. To do this, use the right mouse button to double-click the launch button (opening the Universal Dialog at the Launch Button page) and ensure that there is a tick in the box labelled **Explorer**. You may also press any of the keys “1,2,O,E” to open a one or two-pane view of a folder.)

How do I reprogram a Launch Button. ?

Use the right mouse button to double-click on it or choose **Open Dialog** from its popup menu.

I like to use buttons with a caption to the right of the icon, but they can use up too much space. Any suggestions ?

If you place a pipe character (a vertical line: |) in the caption, it will be split into two lines. This works well with font *Arial* size 10. If you use larger fonts, you may find that buttons become too large.

I've created a button for the Printers folder but it won't let me view it as a drop-down menu or print documents by dragging to it. Why ?

If the checkbox **Explorer** is clear in its dialog, then the answer probably lies with the Command Line. This should be blue (to signify that the item is virtual rather than a file) and should read Desktop\My Computer\Printers. For compatibility with Windows 3.1, *Control Panel* in Windows 95 contains a shortcut to the *Printers* folder. It is probably this item you are accessing. You should delete this button, open a drop-down view of *My Computer* and drag the *Printers* item to the Launch Window. (If you don't have a button to launch *My Computer*, use the left mouse button to double-click an empty region of the Launch Window. This will open a drop-down view of the Windows *Desktop*, from which you should choose *My Computer*.)

Why can't I delete a Launch Button by choosing Delete from its popup menu ?

Look at the Options page of the Universal Dialog. Make sure that there is a tick in the box labelled **Allow Delete**.

When I create or delete a Launch Button, the changes are not saved when I close and reopen the Launch Centre. Why ?

You need to change a setting on the Options page of the Universal Dialog. Make sure that there is a tick in the box labelled **Save Settings**. Also, if you are running the Launch Centre on a client computer on a network, by default you may only use the settings provided by the server. If you have permission to do so, you may use the switch **/NetLocalRegistry** to force the Launch Centre to use the registry on the client computer to save and load settings. See Command line switches.

If I choose not to save setting on exit, will alarms still be saved ?

Yes.

I think that one or two launch buttons are buried below others. What can I do to check for this ?

Right-click the Launch Window and choose **Reverse Z order** from the popup menu. If any buttons have become covered, they will be made visible. If buttons have become obscured, try using the **Auto Arrange** command from the Launch Window's popup menu.

I've lost the clock, (or a launch button) but according to the Clock page of the Universal Dialog, it is still visible. Have I found a bug ?

Hopefully, no you haven't. Any control on the Launch Window (i.e. clock or launch button in Version 1 of the Launch Centre) can become lost if it is located beyond the boundaries of the Window. First, you should choose **Shrink Wrap** from the Launch Window's popup menu. If this doesn't help, choose **Reverse Z order** from the popup menu. If there is still no clock visible, you should open the Universal Dialog at the Launch Window page. Next, place a tick in the box labelled **scroll bars**. If scroll bars appear, then one or more controls are located at least partially beyond the Windows boundaries. Choose **Shrink Wrap** from the Launch Window's popup menu. You should now be able to find the clock and possibly other lost controls. You may also choose **Auto Arrange** from the Launch Window's popup menu. If the control is still not visible, its dimensions are almost certainly corrupt. Either delete or edit the dimensional data (or the delete the whole *Clock* entry) in the Windows Registry. (Dimensional values are *Left*, *Top*, *Width* and *Height*.)

The clock only shows the time, How do I display the date ?

Open the Universal Dialog at the Launch Window page, and place a tick in the box labelled **Date** (below the **Caption** editbox). As if by magic, the date will be displayed on the Title Bar. You can choose to display the time here too.

How do I make the launch Centre open automatically when Windows starts or when I switch on the computer ?

Nothing could be simpler. Open the Options page of the Universal Dialog, and place a tick in the box labelled **Auto open**. This will create a shortcut to the Launch Centre in the Windows *Startup* directory. You can delete the shortcut by removing the tick.

NB: As this helpfile is being written, it is intended that major upgrades to the Launch Centre will not overwrite old copies when installed. Each version of the Launch Centre will have

a name of the sort Launch1.exe, Launch15.exe Launch2, etc. The reason for this being that if an upgrade is found to have a serious bug, you will be able to use the previous version without having to reinstall it. A consequence of this is that you may have to delete the shortcut in the startup directory which launches the older version. (To do this, clear and then tick the checkbox.) This will not be done automatically on installation.

How do I prevent drop-down file menus from closing when I launch an item ?

There are two ways. Firstly, you may launch the item by by choosing **Open** from its popup menu. Secondly, you may remove the tick from the checkbox labelled **Close on Launch** on the File Menus page of the Universal Dialog.

How do I prevent one drop-down file menu closing when another is opened ?

There are two ways. Firstly, you may open the menu by choosing **Drop-down** from the button's popup menu. Secondly you may clear the checkbox on the File Menus page of the Universal Dialog labelled **Close other file menus**.

Why can I print some documents using the **Print To** item from a popup menu but not others ?

Whether a **Print To** item is created on a document's popup menu depends on information stored within the Windows Registry. Whether the item works or not depends on the validity of such information and is outside the control of the Launch Centre. (Indeed, this is also true of most context sensitive items on popup menus such as **Print** or **Scan for Viruses**.)

As this help file is being written, Word 7 is known to not work correctly with **Print To**. Other Win95 applications seem to be ok.

ADDENDUM: **Print To** may be provided on popup menus whenever **Print** appears. To make this happen, you must place a tick in the checkbox **Force Print To** on the Options page of the Universal Dialog. This will cause **Print To** operations to be replaced by **Print** operations but only where **Print To** is not provided as a standard Windows verb. The Default Printer will be changed to the required printer temporarily.

Can I use the Launch Centre as the Windows Shell ?

This capability is under development. Currently it is not recommended. If you wish to do so, you will need to edit the text file *System.Ini*. There you will find a line that reads *shell=Explorer.exe*. You must change this line to read something like *shell=C:\Launch1\Launch1.exe /Shell*. When you restart Windows, the Launch Centre will open but there will be no desktop icons nor a Taskbar.

KNOWN PROBLEMS

- 1:** The Notification Area of the Taskbar will be absent from the system. Some components require this area to provide a means of activation after loading.
- 2:** The **Shutdown** button on the primary Launch Window may not operate. The system may be closed down safely by pressing Ctrl-Alt-Del to open the *Close Program* dialog or by double-clicking the Windows Desktop thereby opening the Task Manager.
- 3:** *Explorer* opens every time the *Find* command is used. Currently, this problem has been overcome by opening a hidden *Explorer* window whenever the Launch Centre is run using the */Shell* switch. Since *Explorer* is therefore already open, *Find* appears to work

normally.

If you wish to see roughly how things work without having *Explorer* loaded, open the *Shutdown* dialog and press *Ctrl-Alt-Shift* while clicking the **No** button. This will close *Explorer* (causing the desktop shortcuts and Taskbar to vanish).



Using the Keyboard

NOTE: Because the Launch Centre normally tracks the mouse as it moves, when instead of the mouse, the navigation keys, etc. are used to drive the Launch Centre, the mouse cursor often has to move as well. If for any reason, calls made to the Windows API function *SetCursorPos* should fail, e.g. because there is no mouse driver installed, then certain keyboard operations may also fail.

Use of a Win95 keyboard is recommended since popup menus are activated using a new key to the left of the right-hand shift key. (If you do not have a Win95 keyboard, you may normally use the *Insert* key instead.) This key shall henceforth be called the *Popup* key.

Choice of keys for various operations may appear a little bizarre. Generally, when this is the case, it is to maintain consistency with Windows. e.g. pressing *F5* to refresh a Launch Window. (*F5* performs this operation in *Explorer*.)

Where an operation may be performed equally well on an item or its parent, pressing the *Control* key will normally determine that the operation is performed on the parent.

e.g. if a launch button is highlighted, pressing the *Spacebar* will open its dialog but pressing *Control-Spacebar* will open the dialog for the Launch Window, it being the parent of the button.

e.g. if a file menu is active, and the letter 'P' is pressed, the property sheet for the highlighted item is displayed. However, pressing *Control-P* will open the property sheet for the parent folder.

Finally, bear in mind that keystroke messages are always sent to the active task. This may not be the Launch Centre. It is easy to forget this when using the mouse since clicking an item in the Launch Centre will immediately activate the Launch Centre before the click is acted upon. To activate the Launch Centre by keystroke, use the hotkey chosen on the Launch Window page of the Universal Dialog.

Launch Window Keystrokes

Pressing the arrow keys *Up*, *Down*, *Left* and *Right* will move the highlight from button to button.

Pressing the *Spacebar* or the letter 'D' opens the Universal Dialog. If a button is highlighted, its page is opened otherwise the Launch Window page is opened. Pressing the letter 'D' has the advantage that it will work even if a file menu is active. (Pressing the *Spacebar* opens the property sheet of the highlighted item.)

Pressing *Control-Space* (or *Control-D*) also opens the Universal Dialog. However, the Launch Window page is always activated irrespective of button highlighting.

Pressing the *Enter* key launches a button or activates an open file menu if it has one. Additionally, pressing the *Down* key will activate a file menu where it is appropriate to do so (i.e. the file menu is displayed directly below the Launch Button.)

Pressing the *Popup* key will open the popup menu for a launch button. Pressing *Control-Popup* will open the popup menu for the launch window.

Pressing the *Alt* key will activate or deactivate the Task Menu, if any. To activate a task, use the arrow keys to highlight it and press *Enter*.

Pressing the letter 'P' will launch the property sheet (if any) of a highlighted button's target.

Pressing *Alt-S* or *Alt-F* will open the popup menu of the **Shutdown** item on the Task Menu (if any). The popup menus of the other items on the Task Menu cannot be accessed from the keyboard.

Certain keystrokes recognised by File Menus are also recognised for Launch Buttons where this is appropriate.

The *Tab* key is ignored.

Also note that you may choose a hotkey for each launch button. See the [Launch Button](#) page of the Universal Dialog.

File Menu Keystrokes

Pressing the *Up* and *Down* keys will move the highlight.

Pressing the *Enter* key will launch documents, etc. If the highlighted item is one of several selected files, pressing *Enter* will open all the selected files.

Pressing the *Home* key will move the highlight to the top of the menu.

Pressing the *End* key will move the highlight to the bottom of the menu.

Pressing the *Page Up* and *Page Down* keys will move the highlight 10 items up or down.

Pressing the *Right* or *Plus* keys will open a folder if the highlighted item points to one.

Pressing the *Left* or *Minus* keys will open the parent folder, if any.

Pressing the *Backspace* key will revert to the original folder however much navigation has taken place.

Pressing *F5* will reload the menu. (This should rarely be needed. All menus derived from filing system directories are automatically updated.)

Pressing the letter 'O' or the number '1' will open a single-pane view of a folder if the highlighted item points to one.

Pressing the letter 'E' or the number '2' will open a dual-pane view of a folder if the highlighted item points to one.

Pressing the letter 'F' will open the Windows *Find* dialog.

If the operation of the above keys cannot be applied to the highlighted item, it will be applied to the parent folder.

Pressing the letter 'P' or the *Spacebar* will open the property sheet (if any) of the highlighted item.

Pressing the *Popup* key will open the popup menu of the highlighted item.

Pressing the *Control* key with any of the above, will cause the parent folder to be acted upon (with the exception that *Control-Insert* performs the file **Copy** function: see below).

If you wish to select a single file, highlight it and press *Control-Enter*.

If you wish to select several consecutive files, press *Shift-Enter* at the beginning and end of the sequence.

If you wish to select all the files in a menu, press *Control-A*.

If you wish to invert the selection of files, press *Control-I*.

If you wish to delete the selected files, press *Delete*. (The highlighted item must be one of those selected. Files will be sent to the recycle bin if appropriate.)

Pressing *Escape* will clear the selection, but if no files are selected, the file menu will be closed.

When dragging a file using the mouse, the *Up*, *Down*, *Page Up* and *Page Down* keys may be used to scroll the target menu. Dragging files without using a mouse (or similar device) is not possible.

Cut and paste operations can be performed using the following keys :-

Copy : *Control-C* or *Control-Insert*.

Cut : *Control-X* or *Shift-Delete*.

Paste : *Control-V* or *Shift-Insert*.

Status : *Control-S*. (Displays a hint window for a few seconds giving information on the status of the paste buffer.)

When using **Cut** or **Copy**, if the highlighted item is one of several selected items, then the operation is applied to all the selected items. However, if the highlighted item is not one of those selected, or there are no selected items, then the operation is applied solely to the highlighted item. Whenever a cut or copy operation is performed from the keyboard, a hint window will appear to confirm that the instruction has been accepted. No confirmation is issued when a successful paste operation is completed, however, if pasting is not possible, then a hint to this effect will appear. Such hints vanish after a few seconds.

NOTES

1: Cut and Paste operations within the Launch Centre are carried out without using the Windows Clipboard. However, items placed on the Windows Clipboard by *Explorer* may be pasted. In this case, you will be asked whether you wish to move or copy files.

2: Clearly it's easy to make a mistake when using the keyboard to perform cut and paste operations so be careful. However, if you make a mistake, don't panic, simply open one of the folders concerned using *Explorer*, and choose **Edit|Undo**.

3: If you wish to be able to delete single files simply by pressing the **Delete** key, place a tick in the checkbox labelled **Enable Delete key** on the File Menus page of the Universal Dialog.

Internet Explorer

As this help file is being written, where an item represents a channel (i.e its popup menu displays the **Open Channel** command), pressing either the letter 'I' or the letter 'C' should open the channel. (The letter 'I' representing "Internet", or the letter 'C' representing any of "Channel", "Connect" or "Call".) This applies equally to Launch Buttons and File Menus. As with the letters 'O' and 'E', if the operation is not valid for the highlighted item in a File Menu, it will be applied to the parent folder if appropriate.

As Microsoft continue to develop *Internet Explorer*, these features may be reviewed.

Suggestion

You may, if you wish to do so, choose to trigger Launch Buttons using letters. For instance, you may like to open *Notepad.exe* by pressing the letter **N**. To do this, open the *Notepad* launch button by right double-clicking it. Using the mouse, click the **Hotkey** editbox in the resulting dialog, press the letter **N** and click the **Done** button.

If the *Notepad* button is not present you will have to create it. You may even have to install it from your Windows CD. To create the button, locate *Notepad.exe* using *Explorer*, and drag it to an empty area of the Launch Window, or its title bar.



Design philosophy

The Launch Centre has been written entirely using Delphi 2 from Borland. Delphi is based on the Pascal programming language in which the author has over fifteen years of experience including versions of Turbo Pascal V3 (also from Borland) onwards. The Pascal language has been much advanced by Borland (although it still has some way to go to be perfect !!) and is in many ways superior to the 'C' programming language which is considered by many to be the *de facto* standard language. (Windows itself is written in 'C'.) Both languages date back to around 1970. 'C' was designed to be a portable and powerful language whereas Pascal was designed to introduce students to good programming practices. Bluntly, 'C' encourages dirty programming practices while Pascal encourages good practices. Since the Launch Centre is intended to be a clean and well-behaved program, Pascal was the natural choice. (Visual Basic from Microsoft was never seriously considered since it does not produce native-code programs.)

The Launch Centre program code is considerably larger than was anticipated when the project began. Currently it stands at over 600K bytes even when compiled with optimisations switched on. The expected size was around 300K bytes !! However, it does much more than was originally intended. The original plan was to develop a simple launchpad program. Unfortunately, the author is a bit of a perfectionist and it has grown and grown into an extremely sophisticated product, albeit more than a year overdue. In truth, there are still areas where improvements are planned. These features have not been incorporated into Version 1 simply because they cannot be made to work !!.

Whilst Windows 95 is a vast step forward for the user, for the programmer, it is a nightmare !! A great many API calls simply do not behave as expected. For instance, one is supposed to return a null pointer if an error occurs, whereas it cannot be made to work at all within the Launch Centre and usually results in a memory access violation !! (Microsoft take note : *IShellFolder.GetUIObjectOf*) And while the Delphi system is very good, it offers very little high-level support for the new features of Windows 95. Access to almost all such features require the programmer to work directly with the Windows API. (At the time of writing, the author has only glimpsed at Delphi 3 but most improvements appear to be in other areas.) So Version 1 of the Launch Centre does not allow certain drag & drop operations to be carried out (a minor and occasional inconvenience) and does not allow access to *Explorer's* popup menus (but the Launch Centre equivalents are better anyway in some areas.). These restrictions are due to an inability to use the Windows interfaces called *IContextMenu*, *IDropSource* and *IDropTarget*. Microsoft and Borland, please take note !!

So you might be forgiven for thinking that the Launch Centre is only half-finished. In fact, 85% finished would be nearer the mark which is not half bad for any product labelled "Version 1.x" !!. And indeed, friends have been telling the author that it's ready for the market place for several months. Version 2 should solve most known problems but is not likely to become available until the second half of 1999 so please don't be put off from using the Version 1 by the expectation that Version 2 is imminent. (The registration cost of Version 2 to users who have a registered copy of Version 1 is likely to be discounted, indeed, the upgrade may be free.) On the other hand, as problems become known, and there are bound to be a few, minor upgrades will be made available. And if ways are found to simply incorporate new features, these will be included in the minor upgrades.

Design Considerations

The Launch Centre is designed to use the absolute minimum of resources. For instance, the Universal Dialog is constructed only when it is requested. Some applications construct their dialog windows when the program initialises, and simply hide them until needed. To make sure that the Universal Dialog appears promptly, only the required page is constructed initially. Other pages are constructed only when needed. When the Universal Dialog is closed, it is utterly destroyed and all resources freed. These are examples of the philosophy behind its internal operations.

The Launch Centre has been tested thoroughly throughout its development. And when better ways of solving problems have been devised, huge chunks of code have been mercilessly rewritten or thrown out. Whilst fudges are inevitable in any large program, on the whole, the Launch Centre program code is elegant and should therefore be reliable. Indeed, so far as the author is aware, only two serious bugs have appeared in pre-release versions. One seemed to be a result of an obscure fault in Windows memory management and has now been allowed for, the other would cause a system wide crash on systems where *Adobe Type Manager* was installed and was a result of calling the API function *DestroyIcon* with an invalid icon handle.

Furthermore, although the Launch Centre requires several timers, (to update the clock, update the task menu, update drop-down file menus and to auto-hide launch windows if required) only one timer is actually created and it is shared. This helps to reduce overheads thus keeping your computer moving as fast as possible.

To reduce CPU load even more the AppTimer uses an interval equal to the largest interval of any enabled timer. e.g. if the Task Menu is not visible and the clock does not have seconds enabled, the AppTimer will use an interval of one minute (unless there are dropdown file menus open). Furthermore, the Taskmenu reduces its update rate to every two seconds shortly after the Launch Centre is deactivated.

(For those that are interested, Delphi defines a standard component call a **Timer**. The Launch Centre program code defines a syntactically compatible component called a **UniTimer**. When a **UniTimer** is created, it creates a component call an **AppTimer** (unless one has been created already). The new **UniTimer** is added to a list of **UniTimers** maintained by the **AppTimer**. The **AppTimer** interrupts the CPU no more than once a second and calls the **OnTimer** event handler for each **UniTimer**.)

The presence of the Launch Centre should not slow down any computer with 16M or more of memory. Early development was on a 486DX4-100 computer with 16MB of ram but current development is on a 586MMX-166 computer with 32MB of ram. On the 486 platform performance is good but on the 586 platform performance is excellent.

Whilst you may find the Launch Centre to be a little strange at first, it has been designed to be as intuitive as possible and help is never more than a keystroke away. If you find that there is a feature of the Launch Centre that you don't like, you will probably find that it can be changed through the Universal Dialog. The Launch Centre is highly configurable but the default settings are all sensible. If you persevere and use the Launch Centre, you will soon wonder how you managed without it. (And you may start to wonder why Microsoft think that two clicks are necessary instead of one in *Explorer*, etc. !!).

One criticism that has been levelled at the Launch Centre is that it can appear overly

complicated. So far as popup menus are concerned, every feature that the user might require is, hopefully, provided. These may appear complex but to simplify them would be to reduce functionality. So far as the Universal Dialog is concerned, some pages can appear rather complex, but for most people, default settings will suffice at least initially. Furthermore, you will never have to trudge through loads of menus or dialogs to find the feature that you're looking for. Dialog pages may be complex, but at least there are not many to cope with.

Benchmark

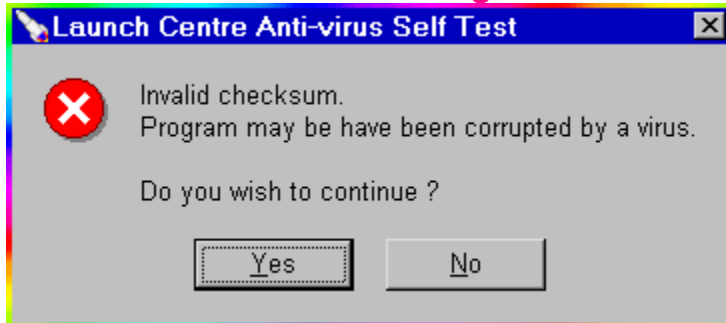
Using the Microsoft program *WinTop.exe* to monitor CPU usage, when deactivated the Launch Centre uses less than 1% of CPU time. (Test performed using an Intel Pentium 166 MMX based computer with 32 MB of ram, with several applications open that it must monitor, several folders open that it must monitor, and the clock is displaying seconds.) When active and idling, the Launch Centre may use slightly more CPU time.



Other Dialogs

Apart from the Universal Dialog, which contains several pages, there are a few other dialogs that you will encounter when using the Launch Centre. Two of these are standard Windows dialogs for adjusting colours or fonts. The other dialogs are unique to the Launch Centre.

The Anti-virus Dialog



This, or a similar dialog may be displayed when the Launch Centre starts. If you see this dialog, your computer may have a virus infection.

When the Launch Centre starts, it loads all its data from the Windows Registry, verifies that it is registered (or the evaluation period has not expired) and performs anti-virus checks. Only if the anti-virus checks fail will such a dialog be displayed.

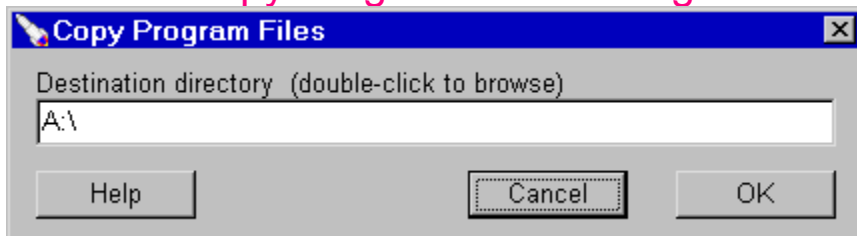
NB: This feature is intended to prevent dodgy copies of the Launch Centre circulating on the internet. The presence of the Launch Centre on your computer does not protect it in any way from viruses. In particular, it should be realised that the majority of virus infections are of the bootsector variety. These would never be detected by the Launch Centre since it itself would never be infected by such a virus. The Launch Centre only attempts to verify its own integrity.

The Colour Dialog.



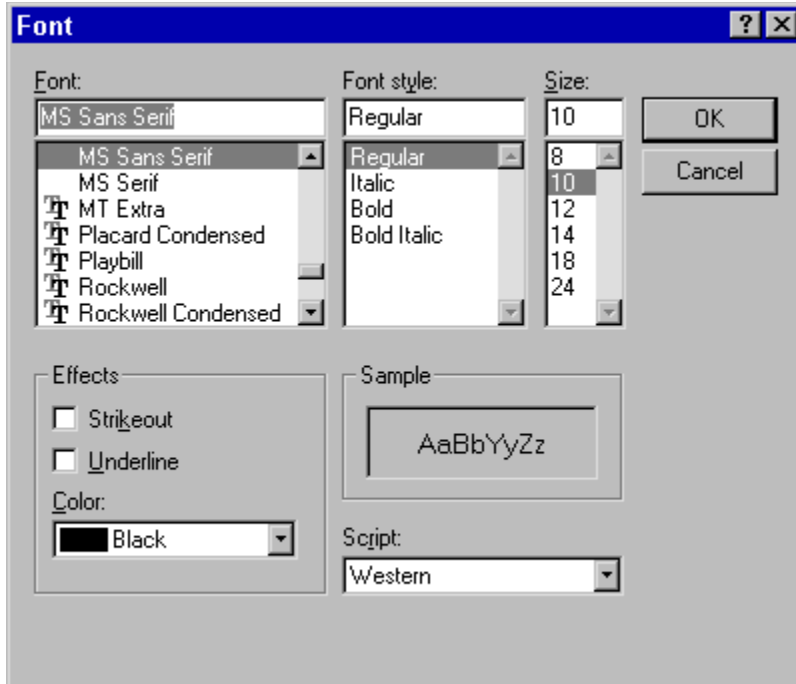
This standard dialog may be used to adjust the appearance of the Launch Window or buttons in the Launch Window.

The Copy Program Files Dialog



This dialog opens when you select **Copy Program Files** from the Launch Window's popup menu. You should use this to create a copy of the Launch Centre, either as a backup, or for a friend. You must choose a directory into which the files that make up the Launch Centre will be copied. The default is floppy drive A:\. If the chosen directory does not exist, you will be asked if you wish to create it. When using a floppy disk, it must be formatted.

The Font Dialog



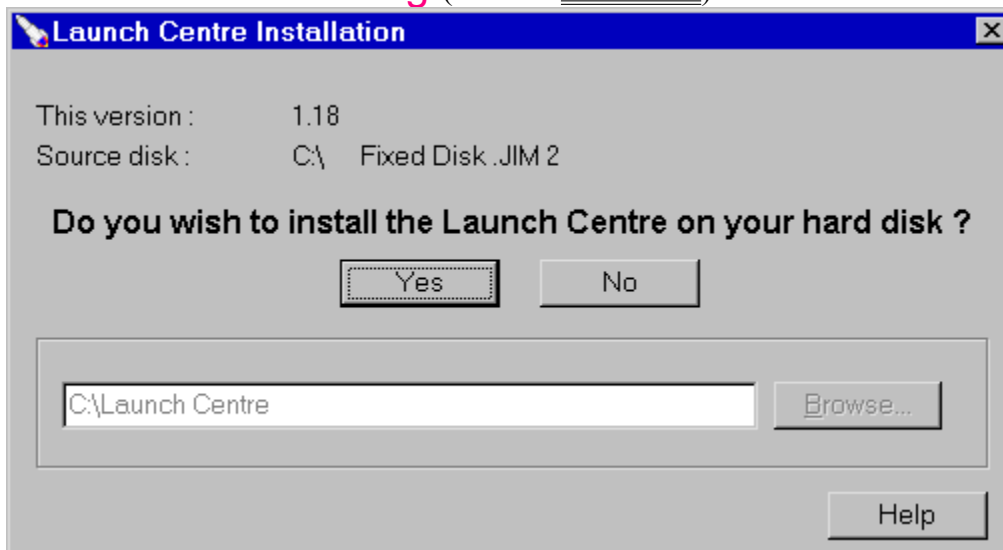
This standard dialog may be used to adjust the appearance of text used in Launch Buttons or drop-down file menus.

NOTES

1: All buttons within a Launch Window use the same font.

2: All popup hints (also known as tooltips) will use the same font but the colours will be chosen by Windows.

The Install Dialog (also see [Disclaimer](#))



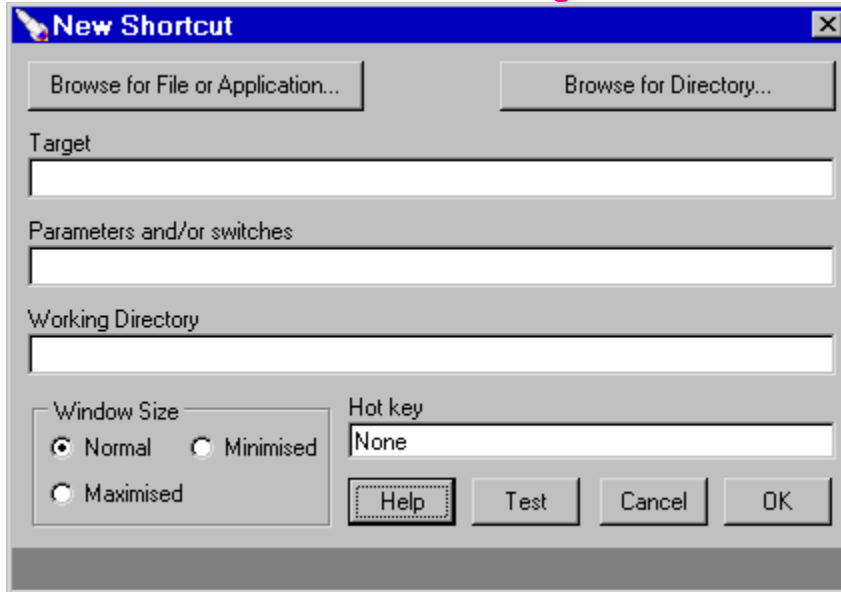
This dialog may open under two circumstances :-

1: The Launch Centre was not run from a local hard disk. e.g. it was run from a floppy disk, CD-rom or possibly from a network drive.

2: The Launch centre was run using the command-line switch */Install*.

If you wish to install the Launch Centre, simply click the Yes button. A license agreement will be displayed and you will have the chance to cancel the procedure if you change your mind.

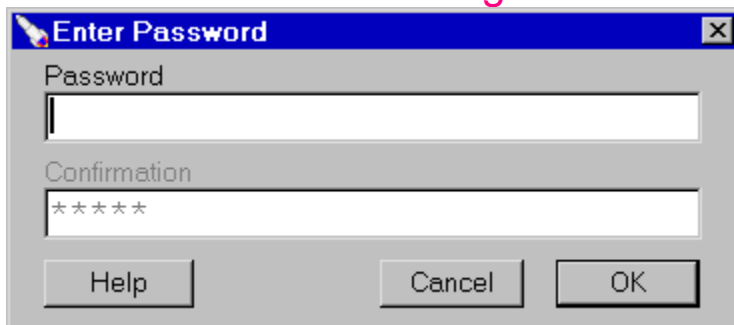
The New Shortcut Dialog



This dialog is opened from the popup menu of a drop-down file menu. You may use this dialog to create a new shortcut. For instance, if you have a directory called Games which contains shortcuts, when you get your hands on a copy of Doom 3, you may wish to create a shortcut to it in this directory. In this case you would simply click the launch button *Games*, to open a drop-down view of the files therein, then right-click any item within it and choose **New | Shortcut** from the resulting popup menu.

In fact, this dialog is included more for completeness than necessity. Normally you would create a shortcut by drag & drop. If you wish to edit an existing shortcut, right-click on it and choose **Properties of Link** (or simply **Properties** from *Explorer*).

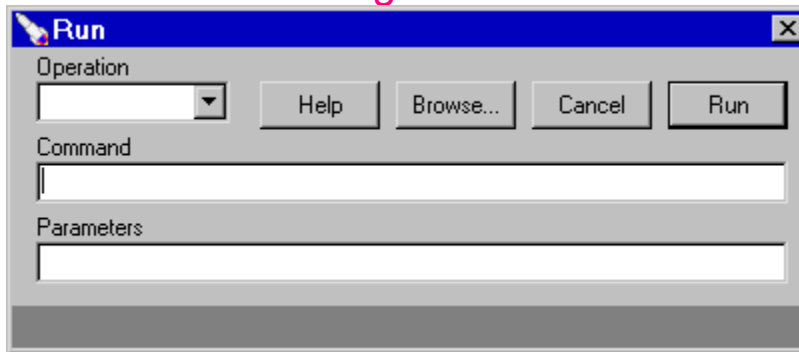
The Password Dialog



This dialog opens when you click the **Password** button on the Registration Page of the Universal Dialog. This button is only enabled if the Launch Centre is registered. Its purpose is to

protect your registration. If other people have access to your computer, or you are an administrator, you must set up a password. If you fail to do this, someone may be able to transfer your registration. This will prevent you from using the Launch Centre !!

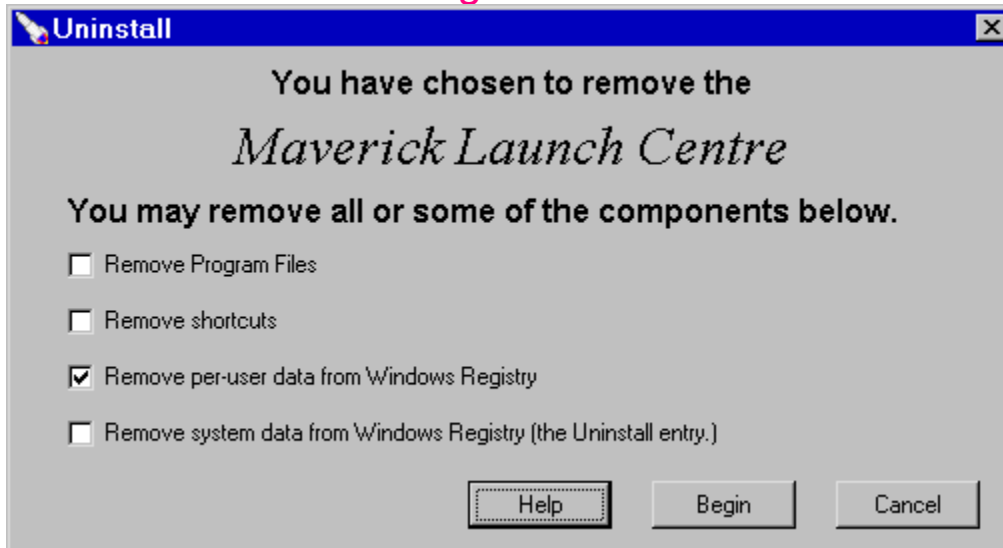
The Run Dialog



This dialog is similar to the *Run* item on the *Start* menu of the Windows Taskbar. However, that has only one editbox and this has three. In the standard dialog, the command and parameters must be supplied on the same line, whereas in this dialog, they are supplied on separate lines. Additionally, you may perform operations other than the default one. For instance, if you choose *Properties* as the operation for a *Word* document, a two or three page dialog will open giving information on the document file.

As with the Universal Dialog, the panel at the bottom of the dialog supplies hint information.

The Uninstall Dialog



This dialog may open under two circumstances :-

- 1: The Launch Centre was run using the command-line switch */Uninstall*.
- 2: The Windows *Control Panel* was used to initiate removal of the Launch Centre.

If you wish to remove all trace of the Launch Centre, place a tick in each checkbox.

NOTES:

1: Security data will not be removed. In particular you should realise that if you uninstall the Launch Centre, the original date of installation will be preserved. Also, if the Launch Centre was registered at the time of removal, a subsequent reinstallation will be automatically registered (i.e. no 60-day time limit).

2: If you choose to remove the per-user data, all Launch Centre data stored in every user profile will be destroyed.

3: You may have to supply a password to remove data from the Windows Registry.

4: Shortcuts located on the Windows desktop may not be removed. In this case, simply drag to the *Recycle Bin*. Other shortcuts that were created automatically will be removed.

5: Shortcuts located in the desktop directory *MLC Shortcuts* will not be deleted.

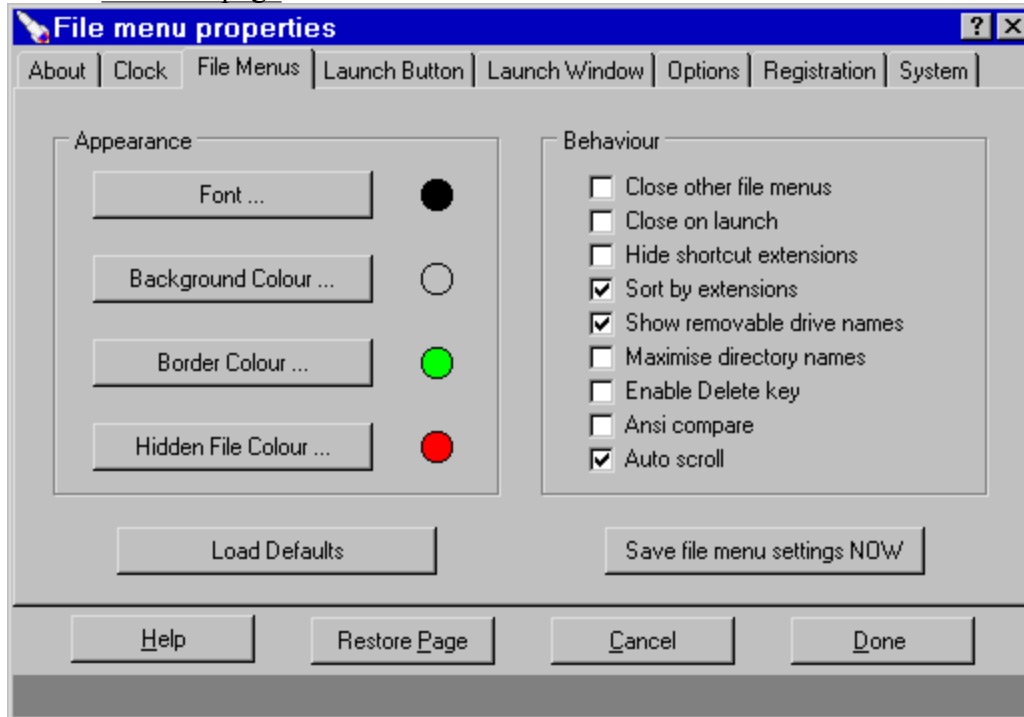
6: Data stored in registry keys other than **MaverickLC** will not be deleted. (See command line switches.)



Universal Dialog: File Menus Page

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This page deals with the appearance and behaviour of drop-down file menus.

The buttons in the **Appearance** group open standard dialogs to adjust colours or fonts.

The checkboxes in the **Behaviour** group perform the following functions :-

Close other file menus, if set, when one file menu opens all others belonging to the same Launch Window will close (unless opening from a launch button's popup menu).

Close on launch, if set, a file menu will close when an item is launched. The Launch Window may also hide depending on its settings.

Hide shortcut extensions, if set, will cause the extensions .PIF and .LNK to be hidden.

Sort by extensions, if set, will cause files to be sorted according to file extensions.

However, some items will always precede others, e.g. directories will precede applications, etc.

Show all drive names, if set, will cause the file-menu display of *My Computer* to display the volume name of all drives including removable ones. You may wish to clear this checkbox to speed up the display of the *My Computer* folder..

Maximise directory names, if set, will cause as much of the directory's path to be used as the title of the file menu as will fit. e.g. *C:\Windows* will be used as a title rather than just *Windows*.

Enable Delete key, if set will allow files to be deleted simply by pressing **Delete**.

WARNING: Depending on the settings of your *Recycle Bin*, use of this feature could result in the accidental and unrecoverable destruction of files.

Ansi compare, if set will cause sorting to use the currently installed language driver. This

will cause file menus to be loaded slightly more slowly, but you may prefer this method of sorting. (The only difference most people will notice is that when this box is checked, the ~ character is placed above the letter A) NOTE: Sorting is not case sensitive i.e. Sarah = SARAH.

Auto scroll, if set will cause long file menus to be scrolled when the mouse moves near the top or bottom of the menu. (Assuming that the file menu has a scroll bar.) Scrolling will begin if the mouse is within half the item spacing of the top or bottom of the menu. Typically, the item spacing of a file menu is 18, therefore, if the mouse is moved within 9 pixels of the top or bottom of the menu, scrolling will occur (after a delay of roughly 300 milliseconds.)

NB: If you use non-standard mouse pointers, the pointer may flicker while scrolling takes place.

Clicking the button **Load Defaults** will cause default values to be chosen. Clicking the button **Save file menu settings NOW** will cause these setting to be saved to the Windows Registry immediately.



Postal Registration

Postal Registration

About | Clock | File Menus | Launch Window | Options | Registration | System

If you live in the UK, enter your name and address below.
Print on a postcard (or a sealed envelope) and send to :-
FREEPOST Cathonian Software

Please enclose a cheque for £10.00 made payable to Cathonian Software.

John Doe
22 Coronation Gardens
Weatherfield
LANCS WT1-1AA

Clipboard
Setup & Print
Print
 Rotate 180°

123110EB / 00000002 / C: / MLC 1.20 / UK

Help | Restore Page | Cancel | Done

This screen appears when you click the button **Register by post** on the Registration page of the Universal Dialog.

Within the United Kingdom

To obtain a registration number, you must print your details on a postcard, place the postcard in an envelope, enclose a cheque for £10.00 made payable to **Cathonian Software** and send to **FREEPOST Cathonian Software**.

NOTES

- 1: You may use a sealed envelope instead of a postcard.
- 2: If you print your postcard by hand, write CLEARLY. (You **must** include the data from the bottom panel of the **Postal Registration** screen, as well as your name and address. DO NOT copy the data from the snapshot above.)
- 3: No stamps are required.
- 4: The postcard will be returned to you with your registration number printed on it. You must enter it on the Registration page of the Universal Dialog. You should keep the postcard safe, or keep a copy of the registration number, in case you ever need to enter it again.
- 5: The **FREEPOST Name** service typically delivers in three working days. Therefore, you should allow at least seven working days for the return of your postcard.
- 6: Prices will be reviewed on or about 1st April 1999 or when the next major revision is released, whichever is sooner.

When you click the **Print** button, you will be prompted to place an envelope or card in your printer. It should be at least ~A6 in size (1/4 of a standard page) and placed long-side vertical (for landscape printing). Normally there will be no need to set up your printer beforehand, but if printing occurs off the card, try placing a tick in the box labelled **Rotate 180°**. (If you were printing on a standard sheet of paper, a tick in this checkbox would cause text to be printed in the opposite quadrant.) The Launch Centre detects whether landscape mode is rotated by +/-90° from portrait mode so unless your printer is set to rotate images by 180°, you should leave this checkbox clear.

When you click the **Clipboard** button, all the data that would be printed will instead be placed on the Windows Clipboard. You may then paste this information into *MS Word*, etc.

Outside the United Kingdom

Initially, registrations will only be accepted from within the UK. This is for a variety of reasons, some computer-related, and others finance, company, tax, postal-service and law-related. However, the delay should only be two or three months, and since you may use the Launch Centre for 60-days without registration, this should not cause too much inconvenience.

The Launch Centre will continue to be made available to publishers to place on magazine covers, but its international release is likely to be via the internet. Look out for a **Cathonian** website. From there, you should be able to download updates, report bugs, etc. Eventually, you may be able to register the Launch Centre online. This service is under consideration, however, there are a number of technical problems to be overcome and not even an approximate date can be given for the commencement of online registration..

Question: Are discounts available for schools, etc.?

Yes. Any educational establishment may order as many registrations as it wishes for use onsite, or offsite by students or teachers. If only a few registrations are required, postcards may be printed in the normal way and enclosed in a strong envelope and sent to the FREEPOST address above. If many registrations are required (more than ~dozen), please use the form **Schools.DOT**. This is a template file for MS Word.

The cost to educational establishments is £7 per registration, subject to a minimum charge of £50.

If you wish to use the Launch Centre in a network environment, you may wish to use centralised registration. See [Networks and Servers](#).

Question: I've found a bug. May I use the FREEPOST address to report it ?

No. The FREEPOST address may only be used to purchase registration numbers. See [Unknown Bugs](#).



Known Bugs

Also see, [Memory Leaks](#) and [Internet Explorer](#).

1. Default icons can appear blurred or out of focus.

Open *Control Panel | Display* and click the tab labelled *Appearance*. Open the listbox labelled *Item*, choose *Icon* and adjust the box labelled *Size* to read 32 and click *OK*. If you restart the Launch Centre, default icons should be displayed normally. (32 is the default setting when Windows is installed so most people should not have a problem.)

Small icons may appear blurred if Windows is set to display them at a size other than 16 (18 may be acceptable). The size used by Windows to display small icons cannot be changed in isolation. It is determined by the size of the font used to display the title bar of a window. To change this setting, proceed as above, but instead of choosing *Icon*, choose *Active Title Bar* and adjust the size of the font. The font *MS San Serif* size 10 should yield a small icon size of 16. If you find that title bars appear too small, the font *Arial* size 11 should yield a small icon size of 18.

After adjusting settings, you should close and reopen the Launch Centre.

So why on earth does this problem occur ??? !!! A very good question indeed.

Windows 95 expects to encounter icons of 32 pixels square and 16 pixels square. Large icons typically appear on the desktop, and small icons in menus. Now icons are normally extracted using the API function *SHGetFileInfo*. There is a flag called *SHGFI_ShellIconSize* for use with this function which is supposed to cause icons to be returned at their native size, but this may not be reliable. If an icon is returned at a non-native size, stretching must have occurred. The Launch Centre uses the API function *DrawIconEx* to display icons. This function also performs stretching if needed, so it is possible for a large icon to be first compressed from its native size of 32 pixels square to, say, 31 pixels square as it is retrieved by *SHGetFileInfo*, and then be stretched back to 32 pixels square by *DrawIconEx*. This stretching and compressing causes blurring.

NOTES

1: Clearing the checkbox labelled **Default Icon** on a launch button's dialog will often cure the problem for an individual launch button. This will cause the icon to be loaded using the API function *ExtractIcon* which always returns an icon at its native size. However, if the button has a virtual command (indicated by **blue command text**) then you will also have to set the checkbox labelled **Special Icon** and locate the required icon manually.

2: You may check the size of small icons using the [System](#) page of the Universal Dialog.

3: Small icons may appear blurred unless *Control Panel | Display | Settings | Font size* is set to *Small Fonts*.

2. The File Move popup menu may not appear or may vanish immediately.

When dragging a file to a folder button, a popup menu should be displayed so that you may choose to copy or move files, etc. When the drag and drop operation is entirely internal to the Launch Centre, this works properly, however, when dragging a file from outside the Launch

Centre, e.g. from the Desktop or from an *Explorer* window, the popup menu may vanish (so quickly that you may not see it). This problem rarely arises using Windows 95B, but using 95A you may encounter it. In this case the solution is very simple. If you wish to drag an item from the Desktop, click on the Desktop before initiating dragging (thereby causing the Launch Centre to lose focus). If you wish to drag an item from *Explorer*, ensure that the *Explorer* window is focused (e.g. by clicking on its title bar) before initiating dragging.

ADDENDUM: A fix has been implemented that should overcome this problem.

3. Some applications interfere with window sliding and the operation of the remnant.

There may be a delay of about a second after moving the mouse over the remnant before the Launch Window appears. So far, no fix has been found for this problem, however, if you click on the remnant, the Launch Window will reappear instantly. For those who are interested, the problem seems to be caused by some applications being reluctant to lose focus when called upon to do so by another application. However, they will give up focus immediately when the user so requests by clicking the mouse. MS Word 7, MS Access 7, and the MS Office Bar (95) are three such applications, but interestingly, MS Excel 7 seems to be ok. Version 8 products behave similarly. Activation by hotkey can similarly suffer from a delay of about one second.

Window sliding may be painfully slow when some applications are running. A partial fix has been implemented that assumes that sliding should be complete within one second. If a single movement in the sequence takes too long, the increment is successively doubled to speed up completion of the movement. In this case, only partial repainting of windows is performed until the movement is complete whereupon the whole screen is updated. If you use such applications frequently, you may wish to open the Options page of the Universal Dialog and reduce window movements to 1.

4. The Launch Window will not be displayed by moving the mouse over the remnant if the Universal Dialog is open.

This is not really a bug but results from the way Delphi and Windows work. (Mouse movement messages will not be sent to the remnant while a modal dialog box is open such as the Universal Dialog.) A way around this problem may be found in the future, but if the Launch Window does not appear when the mouse is moved over the remnant, first try clicking on the remnant, next try pressing the Launch Window's hotkey (default is F12) and then try clicking on the Launch Centre's Task Button on the Taskbar. This will activate the Launch Centre and, at the very least, activate the remnant or display the Universal Dialog which can then be closed. If the Windows Taskbar is hidden or disabled, use the *Alt-Tab* key combination to activate the Launch Centre.

5. MS Word 7 may not work correctly with the Print To operation.

This is an unexpected problem. *Word 97* (aka *Word 8*, supplied with *Office 97*) seems to work correctly when running under Windows 95B.

6. Some applications may not recognise dropped files correctly.

If a file name contains spaces, the Launch Centre places quotes around the file name to pass it to an application. For instance, if you use *Microsoft Exchange* and try to send a fax by dragging a document to the *Fax Recipient* shortcut in the *Windows\SendTo* directory, the operation will fail if the file name contains spaces, since the Launch Centre will place quotes around the file name. A file name which does not contain spaces will work correctly. The **Send To** operation from a popup menu currently gets around this problem by always using short filenames which do not contain spaces and therefore do not need surrounding quotes. A way may be found to solve this problem, but a solution is unlikely until the drag and drop system is upgraded to use the Win95 *IDropTarget* and *IDropSource* software interfaces, expected with Version 2 of the Launch Centre.

7. When deleting empty directories, drop-down file menus may not be updated.

This appears to be due to a minor bug in Windows rather than in the Launch Centre program code. To confirm that a directory has been deleted, you may press F5 to update the drop-down file menu. When using *Internet Explorer 4*, this problem does not seem to occur.

8. Control Panel items may fail to launch.

The drop-down file menu view of *Control Panel* may fail to launch items. In this case, right-click *Control Panel* and choose **Open** from the popup menu. You may launch whatever you wish from the *Explorer* window that opens. Subsequent attempts to launch *Control Panel* items from within the Launch Centre should be successful. This fault is believed to lie outside the Launch Centre program code.

NOTE: This problem also affects the launching of *Control Panel* items by other means. e.g. launching the *Date/Time Properties* dialog by double-clicking the launch window clock.

9. Whenever the caption of an item on the Task Menu changes, the whole menu bar has to be redrawn.

Additionally, the rainbow border may also be redrawn. This is not normally a problem since most captions are static, however, when a caption is continually being updated, this may prove to be irritating.

The only such application that most people will encounter is the *CD Player* supplied with Windows. When minimised the caption is continually updated to reflect track information. A sneaky trick has been used to overcome this problem, however, it will only work if the caption doesn't change length either in terms of characters or pixels. In the case of the *CD Player*, this will be ok provided that the font used by the Launch Window uses characters of the same width for all digits.

10. Pasting single files from the Clipboard may fail.

The Launch Centre may not see single files placed on the clipboard by *Explorer*. This problem is under investigation. At this time, the fault appears to lie outside the Launch Centre program code.

11. If you have a scrolling screen mode set up, the Launch Window may not maximize correctly.

You may have to close and reopen the Launch Centre even after turning off scrolling. (A scrolling screen mode permits you to define a desktop area larger than the viewable area. This feature is rarely useful unless you need to closely examine an item.)

12. If the Primary Window is resized so that it is very narrow, the Task Menu may not be displayed correctly.

It will still operate correctly, however, if you have a particularly large font defined for the Launch Window, you may not be able to read items on the Task Menu at all.

13. When selecting several buttons (by dragging out a rubber rectangle) the Launch Window can become corrupted visually.

Normally this only occurs when a popup hint appears when the mouse pauses. To refresh the display, press F12 twice (or whatever hotkey is programmed for the Launch Window).

14. Popup menus may be displayed erroneously.

Using the right mouse button to double-click an item in a drop-down file menu will normally result in a properties dialog being opened. This works fine using Windows 95A, however, using 95B, the popup menu for the item may also be displayed. A fix has been implemented which makes this very unlikely, but it is still possible. (If the mouse moves during the second click of the double-click, the popup menu may be erroneously displayed.)

15. Some document files cannot be opened successfully in a single operation.

When several files are selected on a drop-down file menu, it is normally possible to launch all the files at once. However, this may fail with some document files. The problem seems to occur when the application used to open the documents does not use DDE. Typically, such applications will be older, probably 16-bit ones designed for Windows 3.x. For instance, *Topdraw 2*, an excellent if inexpensive drawing program only opens the first of several .TDR files. Additionally, when some documents are opened in this way, several instances of the application may be opened rather than a single instance opening several documents.

Whilst it might be possible to write fixes for these problems with specific applications in mind, fixes that would apply to all problem applications would be tricky to implement.



Unknown Bugs

Whilst every effort has been made to reduce the likelihood of major bugs being found in the Launch Centre, you may nevertheless discover one. However, be aware that it is possible for the Launch Centre to crash as a result of a crash in another program; so please don't be too hasty to blame the Launch Centre. In particular, it should be realised that when a Task Menu is displayed on the primary Launch Window, the Launch Centre has to monitor other processes. Additionally, the Launch Centre often passes instructions to *Explorer* which may not be 100% stable itself.

I think I've found a bug. What should I do ?

1: If the bug is a minor one, read through the sections Known bugs and Quick Questions and Answers. You may find a solution.

2: Try adjusting settings on various pages on the Universal Dialog. In particular, try restoring defaults where this is possible.

3: If the bug has only recently appeared, think back and try to establish whether the installation of another program may be to blame.

4: If the bug only occurs occasionally, try restarting the Launch Centre when it does occur.

5: If possible, try to establish whether the bug is present on other people's computers. If not try to work out what difference is causing the problem.

6: Try looking on magazine coverdiscs for an updated version of the Launch Centre.

7: If all else fails, by the time you read this, there should be a **Cathonian** website set up. From there, you should be able to report bugs, download updates, etc. When reporting a bug, please be concise, but if it is of any complexity, include all relevant details. Such details may include what version of Windows you are running, what other software you have installed and what version of the Launch Centre you have. If the bug is intermittent in nature, try to establish a sequence of events that is guaranteed to go wrong.

8: Finally, please accept sincere apologies. In a perfect world, no computer program would ever be released with even a single bug in it. Unfortunately, the world is not perfect and neither are the operating systems such as Windows nor the applications that run on them. If you've never done any computer programming, consider this:- The Launch Centre source code consists of over 24,000 lines of Pascal. A tiny fault anywhere in that code could cause a problem. Such a fault could be something as simple as a semicolon in the wrong place. (If you have done some programming, and you think that 24,000 lines of code sounds rather flabby, try putting the Launch Centre through its paces. It may do rather more than you realise !!)

One last thought. Though hardware faults are much rarer than software faults, sometimes the cause of a problem can lie with device drivers. For instance, when launch windows or drop-down file menus vanish, occasionally the display may not be updated correctly. Where this problem lies is hard to say, but so far, it has only been observed in the presence of Diamond Stealth DRAM graphics cards. You may wish to try updated versions of drivers for your computer but this can only be recommended if the fault is serious. You may otherwise find

you've jumped out of the frying pan



Customisations

If you purchase **Customer.DLL** to enable network registration, your about/startup screen could look something like this.



Whilst the text in the lower box is embedded in the file **Customer.DLL** and cannot be altered, when **Customer.DLL** is detected and the network code has been entered (on the Registration page of the Universal Dialog) then an image file called **Portrait** may be used to fill the right-hand frame. This file may be of type **.EMF**, **.WMF** or **.BMP**. Files of type **.EMF** or **.WMF** are preferred since such images are similar to true-type fonts in nature. i.e. they can be displayed correctly at any size. If the image file is of type **.BMP**, it will still be stretched to fit the frame it is placed in, but such stretching may not be satisfactory. To avoid stretching, the image size should be 192 by 232 pixels, however, these dimensions are not guaranteed to remain constant in future editions of the Launch Centre. To create an image file of type **.EMF** or **.WMF**, you will need a vector drawing program such as *Corel Draw* or *TopDraw*. To create a **.BMP** file, you simply need any paint program. If you have a scanner, you could scan in the company logo and place it here.

Also see the About page of the Universal Dialog.

Promotional copies

Generally, customisations can only be made using the file **Customer.DLL**. However, if an organisation wishes to do so, it may be able to purchase a specially customised edition. Such copies will require registration in the usual way, but may be given away freely as part of a promotion/advertising campaign, in the same way that promotional pens or mugs may be printed and given away. The cost will be dependant on a number of factors but typically will be between £100 and £1000. Some organisations may be refused. In this case, no reason will be given.

NOTES:

- 1: The costs of duplication shall be borne by the customer.
- 2: Payment must be made prior to despatch. This arrangement is non-negotiable.
- 3: The customised copy will be supplied either on CDR disc or on 3½ inch floppy disk at the discretion of Cathonian Ventures.

4: The customer shall be expected to perform any testing it believes is required. Should a fault be discovered in a customised copy after distribution, neither Cathonian Ventures, nor the author of the Launch Centre shall be liable.

5: If the user later obtains an updated copy of the Launch Centre, the customisations of the previous copy will be discarded (except where they are part of **Customer.DLL**)

6: Copyright to all editions will remain entirely with the author. This is non-negotiable.

7: An advert can be placed at the bottom of the contents page of the help file. If the user presses **F1** while the startup screen is visible, the help file will be opened at this advert.

Charities

Requests from charitable organisations will be considered preferentially and customised editions may be provided free of charge. If a charity wishes to raise money through registrations of the Launch Centre, this will be considered. Profits shall be split equally between the charity and Cathonian Ventures / the author.

NOTES:

1: To prevent confusion, this basic 50/50 split is non-negotiable.

2: The price of registration shall be set by Cathonian Ventures. Generally, this will be at least 50% more than the prevailing standard price.

3: Only efficient charities with a very good record of minimising administration costs will be considered.

4: Such requests may be refused without giving a reason.

5: Profits shall be deemed to be the residual amount after deducting VAT, explicit bank and postal charges, etc. plus £1.00 for miscellaneous costs.

e.g. If the registration price is set at £15.00, Customs and Excise will be paid ~£2.25, bank and postal charges will amount to ~90 pence. This leaves ~£11.85. Subtract £1.00 to cover miscellaneous costs: This leaves ~£10.85 to be split equally. Thus, out of the original cost of £15.00, the charitable contribution would be roughly £5.43. If it is able to do so the charity would be free to claim back its portion of the VAT paid. (Good luck !!!)

6: The exact figure representing the charitable contribution per registration must be agreed in advance.

7: This figure may or may not appear in documentation accompanying the Launch Centre: this decision shall lie entirely with Cathonian Ventures.

8: This figure may or may not be placed on the about/startup screen: this decision shall lie entirely with Cathonian Ventures.



Miscellaneous

License

You may evaluate the Launch Centre for up to 60 days. After this period, it will cease to operate other than to accept registration. To register the Launch Centre, you must purchase a registration number which must then be entered on the [Registration](#) page of the Universal Dialog. See [Postal Registration](#).

If your copy of the Launch Centre is a public edition, you may freely distribute it in its entirety, but you may not modify or add to it in any way whatsoever. Especially, the Launch Centre may not be modified so that it will run for more than 60 days without registering it. If you are unsure whether your copy is a public edition, read the bottom panel on the [About](#) page of the Universal Dialog.

Disclaimer

Neither the author of the Launch Centre, nor any party involved in its sale or distribution can accept any responsibility for loss or damage to data or any consequential losses resulting from use of this product. During the evaluation period, you should endeavour to test the Launch Centre whilst running all the applications (with non-critical data) you are likely to be using. Windows 95 is much better than Windows 3.1 at protecting processes from crashes in other processes but it is not infallible. In other words, a crash in one program may cause another program, such as the Launch Centre to crash.

You should not however lack confidence in the Launch Centre. During the entire development period, the author has lost no data as a result of using the Launch Centre. This is more than can be said of several other programs used by the author over the same period !!! Nevertheless, the Launch Centre is a very complex program and makes extensive use of the Windows API. A number of problems in the Windows API have been identified and where possible, fixes have been implemented. However, Windows is under continuous development by Microsoft and changes to the API may result in new problems, though these are likely to be minor behavioural details rather than major issues. (Early development of the Launch Centre was under Windows 95A but recent development has been under 95B running Internet Explorer 4.)

NB: Whilst the Launch Centre may run perfectly well under Windows NT4 or NT5, it has not been so tested at this time. Furthermore, it will not run under Windows NT 3.5x.

Program Files

There are only two essential program files: these are **Launch1.exe** (the main program file) and **Launch1.hlp** (the context sensitive help file).

Various bitmap files, such as **Houston.bmp**, are provided for use as backgrounds.

Install.exe may be used to install the Launch Centre on your computer. **Uninstall.exe** may be used to remove the Launch Centre from your computer. (These programs search for the most recent copy of the Launch Centre and call it with the command-line switch **/Install** or **/Uninstall**.)

Delete.exe is required when uninstallation is performed (to remove program files).

Dos.pif is only required to initiate MSDOS mode when using the Launch Centre as the Windows Shell (not recommended yet).

ReadMe.txt provides information on installation.

Customer.dll may be bought separately to enable centralised registration on networks.

Customer.dot and **Schools.dot** are MS Word template files to be used when ordering a copy of **Customer.dll** or several registration codes as school rates (discounted).

Maverick

“Maverick” is the code name of the Launch Centre whilst under development. This name may change in the final release depending upon whether the use of this name infringes Trademarks, etc. The choice of name reflects not only the author's general views on life, but also the fact that the Launch Centre, does not attempt to rigidly adhere to Windows philosophy. Some people may like the single-click environment provided by the Launch Centre, but certainly other will not, if only because they are used to the double-click launch of desktop shortcuts.

(If you think that double-click launch of desktop shortcuts is sensible, you must find single-clicks to be useful. Well, a single click on a shortcut's name can be useful, to rename it, but only if it has already been selected, so even this requires two-clicks most of the time.!!!)

NB: This product is not related to any other product, company or organisation which uses the “Maverick” name. Future releases may use the “Maverick” name but any products designed or written by the author of the Launch Centre, will bear the PSCYGOTE logo, so if you like this Launch Centre, look out for the robotic goat's head.

Copyright and "PSCYGOTE"

Please note that copyright applies to the word “PSCYGOTE” and to the logo as well as to the Launch Centre software and this help file. In other words, the PSCYGOTE logo (on the About page of the Universal Dialog) should not appear in any collections of clip-art or on any products of any type sold, leased, rented, or given away in any country. Nor should the word “PSCYGOTE” be used in any context without written permission : the sole exception being it may be used when reviewing or otherwise writing about any product bearing the PSCYGOTE logo.

Further, copyright applies to any image files distributed with the Launch Centre, especially those that include the PSCYGOTE logo.

The Launch Centre has been written primarily to fund the development and marketing of a number of products unrelated to computers. Although two more software titles are planned, these will not be on the same scale as the Launch Centre and indeed if other companies or independant developers fill these gaps, then there may be no more software titles bearing the PSCYGOTE logo.

NB: If the author sells the Launch Centre to another software company, that company will not automatically acquire the right to use the PSCYGOTE logo. Approval to use the logo will depend on a number of factors, primarily guarantees on price and quality. The PSCYGOTE logo will only be used for products designed (at least initially) by the author of the Launch Centre.

When such products are further developed and/or marketed by other companies, the presence of the PSYGOTE logo on the product should inspire confidence in the intrinsic quality of the product and also confidence that the price reflects production costs and reasonable profits rather than outrageous greed.

Memory Leaks.

Leaks in Windows resources have been observed under testing. Leaks (as determined using the Windows Resource Monitor *RsrcMtr.exe*) have only been observed when other applications are loaded or when file movements are made. In so far as are no leaks have been detected in memory allocated to the Launch Centre, the fault is believed to lie outside the Launch Centre program code. Indeed the Launch Centre has been exhaustively tested in order to rule out blame.

Whilst blame for these leaks cannot be confidently assigned at this time, leaks have only been observed when running 32bit applications. Older, 16bit applications seem to behave better in this regard. The leaks seem to occur both under Windows 95A and 95B. So far as file movements are concerned, all such movements pass through the Windows API function *SHFileOperate*. There may be a problem with this function. Additionally, there may be a problem with reading filenames from the Windows Clipboard when pasting files copied from *Explorer*. This is intermittent and seems only to occur when single files are copied or moved. Whilst other memory leaks do not appear to be cumulative, this one may be. (If you encounter this problem, try opening the clipboard viewer. You may find an interesting message there. For anyone who is interested, when this problem occurs, the API function *EnumClipboardFormats* indicates that there is not only text on the clipboard but also an unknown data format. To clear the problem, try placing anything other than a single filename on the clipboard.)

If *MS Office* is installed on your computer, try this test after restarting the computer and loading *RsrcMtr.exe* :-

Do **not** load the Launch Centre. Open *MS Word*, *Excel* and *Publisher* and then close them again. This has been observed to reduce free resources from 99% to 94%. Interestingly, repeating this action does not normally further reduce free resources. After noting that this occurs without the Launch Centre being loaded, you may draw your own conclusions !!! Being kind to Microsoft, it is possible that *Office* applications (and perhaps other *MS* applications) deliberately reserve some resources for their own use should they be reopened later, though this begs the questions “Why ?” and “Isn't that rather greedy ?”.

Having opened and closed a lot of applications, etc, if the Launch Centre is the only application running, *User* and *System* resources may fall to ~88%. This must be considered normal and should not give cause for concern. If these figures should fall below ~75% when the only the Launch Centre appears to be open, it may be a good time to restart your computer to avoid problems. (If you have additional software running in background, e.g. a fax monitor, then the normal figure may well fall to 85% or perhaps less.)

For the most part, these apparent leaks are probably due to fragmentation rather than faults in program code. Astonishingly, running and closing an application can occasionally result in an increase in free resources. One can only assume that the defragmentation methods used by Windows could be better.

SUGGESTION: Create a shortcut to *Windows\RsrcMtr.exe* and place it in the *Startup* directory. This will add a small meter to the Taskbar Notification Area whenever Windows starts. Keep an eye on the appearance of the meter. When the Launch Centre is loaded on a freshly started computer, *System* and *User* resources should typically fall from 98% to 96% but the exact figures will depend on other software that loads automatically.

Furthermore, you may wish to remove other shortcuts from the *Startup* directory and if you are an experienced computer user, you may wish to edit the Windows Registry to stop other tasks being started. You will need to look in the Registry key **HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE | SOFTWARE \ Microsoft \ Windows \ CurrentVersion \ Run**. If it is present, you may consider removing the entry *Systray.Exe*. The only purpose this appears to serve is to support power management functions yet it creates a veritable mountain of hidden windows.

Creating Toolbars.

Most people who use the Launch Centre will be perfectly happy with one Launch Window. However, some “Techno Junkies” are never satisfied, so it is possible to create any number of Launch Windows. These additional windows may be any size, but small ones are recommended. If they are to be placed on the left or right edges, they should be taller than wide. You should set the border style to *Sizeable Tool Window*.

To create a new Launch Window :-

- 1: Right-click either an empty area of the Launch Window or its title bar and choose **Window | New Window...** from the popup menu.
- 2: Choose its name and other settings and close the Universal Dialog.
- 3: Create the buttons by dragging and then reprogram them if necessary.
- 4: Save the settings.

For real Technos, look out for the facility to pass DDE strings to applications from Launch Buttons in future versions of the Launch Centre.

Viewing the Desktop

A drop-down view of the items on the *Desktop* is available at any time by left double-clicking an empty region of the Launch Window. In particular, this may be useful for creating launch buttons to virtual folders (such as *My Computer*) by dragging them to the Launch Window. It should be noted that the *Desktop* is a virtual folder, therefore it will be displayed with a blue border.

The Windows Registry

All settings and options, etc. are stored within the Windows *Registry*. If you should accidentally corrupt a setting, you should delete it. Default values are provided for all settings that are found to be missing from the Registry, however, validation checks are not guaranteed to be carried out on data that is read in from the Registry.

Currently, the settings are stored in the Registry under the key **HKEY_CURRENT_USER | MaverickLC**. Use of the *MaverickLC* key in the Registry may

change in future versions of the Launch Centre.

If you have to edit an entry in the Registry concerning the Launch Centre, you must first close down the Launch Centre.

To open the Registry editor click on the *Start* button on the Windows Taskbar. Click on *Run* from the resulting popup menu. Next, type in *RegEdit*. Clicking OK or pressing the Enter key should result in the Registry editor being opened.

Be Warned: Do not delete or change any settings other than those for the Launch Centre. Doing so may prevent Windows from operating correctly. If in doubt, read the Windows help information on the Registry.

NB: Use of command line switches may result in other registry keys being used, however, each key name will always begin **MaverickLC_**.

Registry Secrets

Some entries under **MaverickLC | Options** may not be available through dialogs and indeed, the Launch Centre looks for some secret ones which are never written to, and therefore never created in the Registry.

1: *QuickViewCommand*. If you enter a new value under this name, it will be used by the **Quick View** command on popup menus.

2: *SendToPath*. You may enter the name of a directory under this name. The directory must contain shortcuts which will be used to generate the **Send To** submenu on popup menus.

3: *ForcePrintToTimeOut*. If you use the option **Force Print To** you may need to enter a value under this name. A value of ten will mean that the Default Printer will be changed back after ten seconds. A value of zero means the Default Printer will not be changed back after a **Print To** operation. The default value is 20.

NB: By convention, the settings of the Launch Centre should be buried deeply under the **Software** registry key. In future versions of the Launch Centre, therefore, you may have to delve deeper to locate required items. Convention has not been adhered to thus far since, if you decide to use the Launch Centre at all, it is likely that it will become a vital part of your software installation, and so is entitled to a higher place in the Registry than other software items.

NOTE: These entries may be ignored by future versions of the Launch Centre.

Command Line Switches

Also see Networks and Servers and the Windows Registry.

The Launch Centre checks for a number of switches (a.k.a. “parameters”) on the command line when it starts up.

/Install : Displays the Launch Centre Install dialog.
/Uninstall : Displays the Launch Centre Uninstall dialog.
/Shell : Instructs the Launch Centre to behave as the Windows Shell. (Not recommended in the current version of the Launch Centre).

/M : Instructs the Launch Centre to load even if it detects a copy of the Launch Centre is already running.

Only one of the switches above may be used in any command line and it must be the first switch on that command line. Only switches **/M** and **/Shell** may be followed by other switches.

/NetServer : Instructs the Launch Centre to take special actions on the assumption that it is running on a network server.

/NetLocalRegistry : Instructs the Launch Centre to use local settings rather than load settings from a network server.

/NetTestServer : Instructs the Launch Centre to test the settings created with the **/NetServer** switch.

/UserName : Instructs the Launch Centre to use the registry key **MaverickLC_Jim** where “Jim” is the name of the current user.

/RegistryKey : Instructs the Launch Centre to use a specified registry key. The key name follows the switch and the two must be separated by a colon.

e.g. **Launch1.exe /Shell /RegistryKey:JimsShell.**

This will cause the registry key **MaverickLC_JimsShell** to be used to load and store settings.

One further switch may be used when **Customer.DLL** is installed to provide centralised registration. **/NetLocalRegistration** when used on a client will cause central registration to be ignored. This switch is provided for temporary use only e.g. to transfer an existing local registration (since the registration page of the Universal dialog will be hidden when registered as a client.)

There are no secret switches such as **/SuperUser**, **/Debug** or **/Admin**. Sorry !!!!!!!

The Windows Taskbar

(NB: The Taskbar may also be called the *Tray* or *System Tray*.)

Whilst the operation of the Launch Centre is not directly integrated to the Taskbar, there are some guidelines to follow.

If the checkbox **Show Task Menu** is ticked on the Launch Window page of the Universal Dialog, you should have little use for the Windows Taskbar. In this case, you are recommended to set the Taskbar properties to auto-hide. (Right-click the Taskbar and choose **Properties** from the popup menu.)

The Launch Centre is designed to sit at the top of the screen while by default, the Windows Taskbar sits at the bottom.

If you use the *Auto hide* setting of the Taskbar, you may wish to know that holding down the right mouse button while double-clicking the title-bar of the Launch Window (with the left mouse button) should activate the Windows Taskbar. This is especially useful if the Taskbar forgets that it is supposed to be *Always on top* (a setting which is an absolute must unless Microsoft have fixed a bug in your version of Windows).

Also see the Options page of the Universal Dialog for a means of activating the Taskbar by Hotkey.

NB: The method by which the Taskbar is activated is unofficial and so may not work with future versions of Windows, however, it has been tested using Windows 95A, 95B and IE4.

Customisations

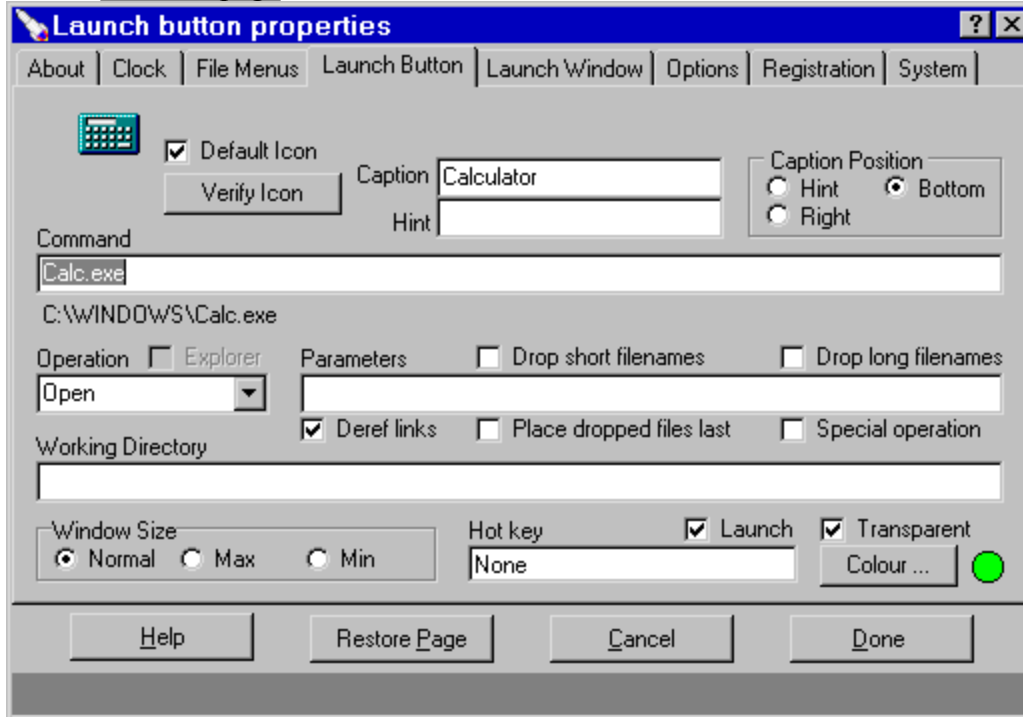
- Snapshot
- Promotional copies
- Charities



Universal Dialog: Launch Button Page

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This page will only be present if the dialog is opened from a launch button or as part of a button creation process. It allows the settings of individual launch buttons to be changed. Launch buttons are extremely flexible being capable of launching applications, opening documents and opening folders, even printing documents, sending faxes and opening internet sites. They can also be used as drop targets for drag and drop operations.

NB: Because this dialog packs a great many components into a small area, several components may be hidden rather than being disabled (dimmed). For instance, if the **Default Icon** checkbox is set then neither the *Up/Down* buttons or the **Special Icon** checkbox and editbox are visible.

Editbox **Command** determines the main action of the launch button. Typical commands are :-

C:\Windows	// open the <i>Windows</i> folder.
C:\Windows\Progman.exe	// open <i>Program Manager</i> .
C:\Letters\Complaint.doc	// open a <i>Word</i> document.

Checkbox **Explorer**, if set, will cause folders and drives to be opened using Windows *Explorer*. If clear, folders and drives will open using drop-down file menus. (To open a two-pane view of Explorer, choose *Explore* rather than *Open* as the **Operation**. See below.)

The **Operation** listbox operates in conjunction with the **Command** editbox. You may type in any operation you wish, but the choices *Open*, *Explore*, *Find*, *Print* and *PrintTo* are likely to be the only ones that you use. However, you may find that some software defines further operations by adding to the Windows Registry. For instance McAfee antivirus software for

Windows 95 adds the operation *VirusScan* to the list of possible operations

Open should be valid for all commands but Windows 95 seems to behave oddly when *Open* is used with .LNK files. As this help file is being written, a fix has been implemented which causes all .LNK files to be opened using a null operation if the *Open* operation has been chosen. However, if your version exhibits problems, it may be that this fix has been altered in which case you may wish to use a null operation. (See Options checkbox **Fix Open bug**)

Explore and *Find* are only valid if the **Command** points to a folder (directory).

Print and *PrintTo* are only valid for documents. Furthermore only documents with associations (programmed using Windows *Explorer* | View | Options | File Types) that support the “Print” and “PrintTo” operation can use the launch button *Print* operation. See Creating Launch Buttons to Printers.

Also see Options and Known Bugs.

NB: If the **Command** editbox points to a folder, then the **Operation** listbox will be disabled unless the **Explorer** checkbox is set.

Editbox **Working Directory** defines the directory where an application will look for work files (e.g. where MS Word might look for documents). In fact, many applications effectively ignore this value and allow you to choose various directories in which to store different classes of files. If no working directory is specified, one will be chosen automatically. (This applies to items launched from drop-down file menus too.) The directory chosen will be either the directory in which the document was located, or the directory in which the executable was located if the executable was used as the command.

If the **Command** editbox points to a directory and the **Explorer** checkbox is clear, the **Working Directory** editbox will be labelled **Show files of type**. In this case, you may enter a mask to filter the files displayed in the dropdown menu. For instance, if you are a Delphi programmer, you may wish to mask out all files other than *.dpr and *.pas. To do this, simply enter the string **.dpr; *.pas*

NOTES

- 1:** The * character is optional (treated as a space).
- 2:** The semicolon is required to separate mask items. There is no limit to the number of masks you can use.
- 3:** Using masks will not noticeably slow things down (indeed very large folders will appear more quickly with fewer items to sort).
- 4:** The extension compared with the mask is that displayed on the right of the menu. For shortcuts, this will depend on the value of File Menus | **Hide shortcut extensions**.
- 5:** Directories, links to directories, etc. will always be displayed, whatever mask is chosen.

Editbox **Parameters** determines what command line parameters (and switches) are sent to an application when it starts.

Checkbox **Drop short filenames**, if set, will force conversion of filenames dropped onto the launch button. Older applications may require this checkbox to be set but newer ones (written for Windows 95) should be able to use long filenames.

Checkbox **Drop long filenames**, if set, will cause even older applications to receive long filenames dropped onto the launch button.

NB: If neither of the checkboxes **Drop short filenames** nor **Drop long filenames** is set, then the Launch Centre will choose which type of filename to send according to the application being launched. This is the recommended setting and will work for most applications.

Checkbox **Deref links**, if set, will cause the target of a link which is dropped onto the button to be passed as a parameter rather than the link itself.

NB: This value is ignored for delete operations. i.e. If you drag a link onto a button in order to delete it, the link will be deleted not the target of the link.

Checkbox **Place dropped files last** affects the order in which parameters are sent to an application launched by a drop operation. If this checkbox is set, dropped filenames will be passed after all parameters listed in the **Parameters** editbox. Otherwise dropped filenames will precede other parameters. Most applications will be unaffected by this setting but some may prefer this to be either checked or unchecked. (Windows *CDplayer.exe* requires this to be checked when the switch */Play* is used.) See [Drag and Drop](#).

Checkbox **Special operation** should never be needed. If this is set, whatever operation is selected, *Open* will be used when the button is launched by clicking. When the button is launched by dropping, the chosen operation will be used and dropped parameters will be passed as commands. This feature was originally created to facilitate printing and deleting files by drag-and-drop operations but is no longer required for this purpose. Experienced computer users may find that this feature is useful for creating buttons to perform irregular tasks.

Radio group **Window Size** determines how much of the screen will be occupied by the launched item.

Normal is the default setting. The application or folder window should be the same size as when it was last closed.

Max stands for maximized. The application or folder window will occupy the whole screen. (Double click its title bar to toggle to *normal*.)

Min stands for minimized. The application will open and run as an icon (i.e. it will only appear as a button on the Windows Taskbar.). To open the application fully, simply click on its task-button on the Windows Taskbar.

NB: A few applications ignore this setting and always appear maximised when launched. This is neither a Windows bug nor a Launch Centre bug, but is rather a feature of the individual application.

Editbox **HotKey** determines what function key, etc. is used to reactivate the application once it has been launched. If the checkbox **Launch** is set, then, provided that the chosen hotkey does not conflict with keys used by the Launch Centre, and provided that the Launch Window is focussed, the hotkey will launch the application.

NOTES

1: *Explorer* windows cannot be reactivated by hotkeys.

2: Whilst unmodified character keys may be used to launch an application, only unmodified function keys are acceptable to reactivate applications.

3: Alt-keys may be used for purposes of reactivating an application but not for launching it.

Checkbox **Default Icon** determines what icon is displayed on the launch button. It is set by default but you may wish to choose other icons. To choose another icon from the default application, (i.e. the application name displayed just below the **Command** editbox) simply clear

the **Default Icon** checkbox and use the *Up/Down* buttons to make your choice. Some applications will only include one icon, so you may choose an icon from another file. Files which contain icons will normally use the extensions *.dll*, *.exe* or *.ico*. To choose an icon from such a file, set the **Special Icon** checkbox and enter the filename in the editbox that appears beside the checkbox. You may then use the *Up/Down* buttons to choose your icon.

Editbox **Caption** determines what text appears next to (or beneath) the launch button icon. Note that it is possible to split a caption over two lines if the **Caption Position** is *Right*. The “pipe” character (the vertical line |) is used to separate the two lines. This should only be used if the chosen font is small enough to display two lines of text within the normal height of the button. (*Arial* font, size 10 is the largest that may be used with two-line captions.)

After changing the caption, you may wish to use the Launch Window popup menu command **Auto Arrange**.

Editbox **Hint** (only visible if the **Caption Position** radio group is set set to *right* or *bottom*) determines what hint is displayed by the launch button when the mouse cursor pauses above it.

Radio group **Caption Position** determines where the caption is displayed relative to the icon.

<i>Right</i>	The caption is displayed to the right of the icon
<i>Bottom</i>	The caption is displayed below the icon
<i>Hint</i>	The caption is displayed as a hint (when the mouse pauses over launch button). Note that hints may be disabled. See <u>Options</u>

Checkbox **Transparent**, if set, will cause the button to be displayed transparently. The **Colour...** button will launch a standard dialog to adjust the colour of the Launch Button. NB: If you wish to change the appearance of several buttons, you may do this in one operation by selecting several buttons and choosing a command from the subsequent popup menu.

Opening several files in one operation.

You may, if you wish, arrange to open a number of files by clicking a single launch button. If the **Command** refers to a directory, you may use the operation '**OpenFiles**'. This is not a verb recognised by Windows but rather it is a verb recognised by the Launch Centre. When a button is launched with this verb, every file in the directory specified by the **Command** is opened in turn.

NOTES (Also see Known Bugs)

1: The files are opened in alphabetical order.

2: File names that begin with a dot are ignored.

3: To view the files in such a directory, right-click the button and choose **Drop-down** from its popup menu.

4: If a directory (folder) called *Startup* is created and placed within the Launch Centre's directory, it will be processed when the Launch Centre starts. This feature may be useful to people who need to specify a particular order for the opening of files. When Windows starts, the order in which files are opened in the *Windows\...\Startup* directory may be undefined. If this is a problem to you, then the Launch Centre provides the solution. Of

course, you will need to place a tick in the box labelled **Auto open** on the Options page of the Universal Dialog if you wish these files to be opened whenever Windows starts.

5: Though there is no restriction on the types of file that may be launched in this way, generally you should just place shortcuts in such a directory.

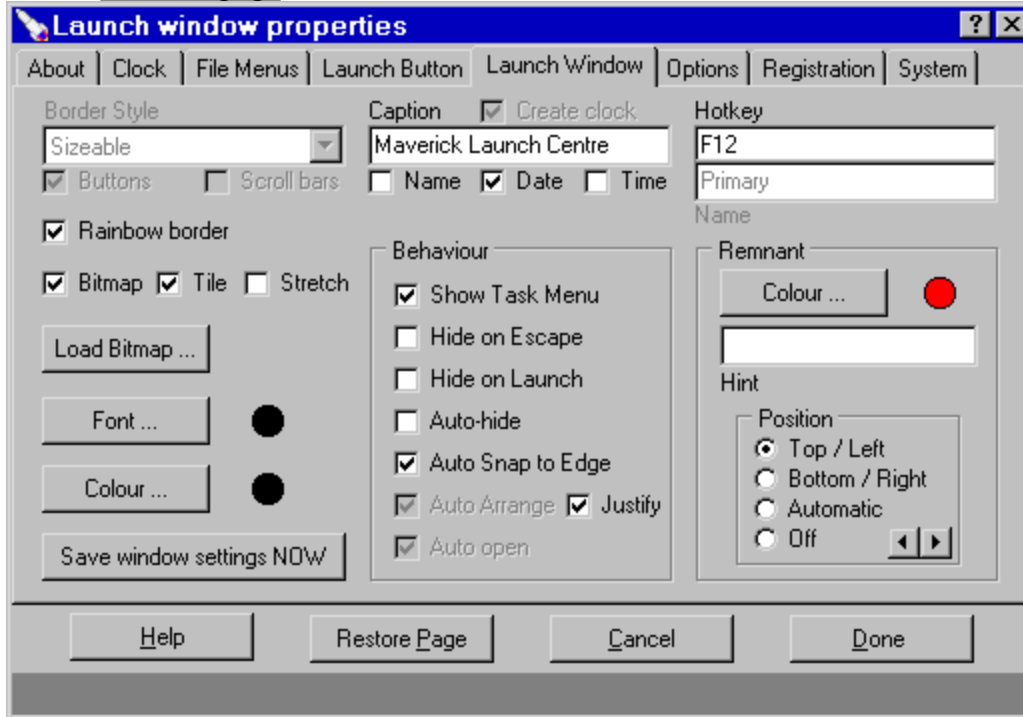
6: You may also launch several files simultaneously from a drop-down file menu. Simply select the files by clicking while either the *Control* or *Shift* keys are pressed and press *Enter* while the mouse is over one of the files.



Universal Dialog: Launch Window Page

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This page primarily deals with the appearance of the Launch Window. Feel free to experiment with all the settings.

The **Border Style** determines such features as whether the Launch Window can be resized. You can even use the Launch Window without any border or title bar. Changes are effective immediately but can be restored using the **Restore Page** or **Cancel** buttons. If the **Buttons** checkbox is cleared, then the title bar will contain no buttons. If the **Scroll bars** checkbox, is set then scroll bars will appear on the Launch Window if a control is (partially) beyond the boundaries of the Window. NB: If the checkbox **Show Task Menu** is set, these settings will be disabled. To adjust them temporarily clear the checkbox.

The **Caption** editbox allows you to choose your own caption for the Launch Window. This feature is provided mainly for use with multiple Launch Windows. There are two checkboxes that control whether or not the time and date are displayed within the Launch Window caption. If you use either of these, you may find it helpful to clear the caption. You may also display the current user name here.

Above the **Caption** editbox is the **Create Clock** checkbox. This will not be enabled for the primary Launch Window. If you clear this checkbox, the clock will not just vanish, it will be destroyed. Consequently, the [Clock Page](#) of the Universal Dialog will vanish since it too will be destroyed. The Clock page will not be recreated until the Universal Dialog is closed and reopened from a Launch Window with a clock.

If the **Rainbow border** checkbox is clear, then the customised edge of the Launch Window will be disabled. NB: The purpose of the rainbow feature is to help the user to realise instantly that the Launch Window is open. The bland grey which typically makes up the toolbar areas of most applications can cause them to be easily confused with one

another.

If the **Bitmap** checkbox is set, a bitmap will be displayed as the background of the Launch Window. The **Tile** and **Stretch** checkboxes adjust the method of display.

Clicking the **Load Bitmap** button, allows you to choose another bitmap. The recommended format is 16 colours used out of a palette of 256 colours, but any bitmap will work.

Clicking the **Font** and **Colour** buttons will open standard dialogs to adjust the appearance. NB: If the font colour and background colours are the same, then transparent buttons will be unreadable unless a bitmap is displayed.

The **Hotkey** editor allows you to choose a hotkey (i.e a function key with or without *Control / Shift / Alt* modifiers) for the Launch Window. This hotkey can then be used to make the Launch Window appear or vanish immediately. If the Launch Window is not visible, is only partly visible or is not active, then pressing the hotkey will bring the Launch Window to the front and make it active. If the Launch Window is already active then pressing the hotkey will cause it to vanish. A remnant may be left behind in one corner or edge of the screen. If the mouse moves over that remnant then the Launch Window will reappear.

NOTES

1: When the Launch Centre deactivates as a result of pressing the hotkey, it will attempt to reactivate the last active window. As this help file is being written, this may not be successful if the Launch Centre was activated by clicking on it, but it should work if the Launch Centre was activated by moving the mouse over the remnant or by using the hotkey.

2: If you open the Launch Centre using a shortcut on the *Windows Desktop* (or, indeed via any shortcut, including one which may place it on a Taskbar *Start* menu) the *Shortcut Key* on the *Shortcut* page of its *Properties* dialog must be *None*. The internal structure of the Launch Centre is somewhat unusual and is likely to become more complex in future versions. In any case, a hotkey used to open the Launch Centre will not correctly reactivate if it becomes minimised. To reactivate the Launch Window by pressing a hotkey, you must use the hotkey set on this page of the Universal Dialog.

Below the hotkey editor, is the **Name** editbox. The name of the Launch Window is used to store settings in the Windows Registry. This editbox will only be enabled when you have created a new Launch Window, but you have not yet saved the settings of the Launch Window to the Windows Registry. In other words, choose the name carefully when you create the window since the only way you will be able to change it after saving is by editing the Windows Registry.

Within the **Behaviour** group are several checkboxes that perform the following functions :-

Show Task Menu, if set, will cause a button bar representing current tasks to be created. This is updated by a timer once a second (or every two seconds when the Launch Centre is inactive.) Unless you have a great many windows open and have a 486-based computer, using this option is unlikely to use more than about 2% of CPU time.

NB: This checkbox will be disabled if the Universal Dialog was opened by right-double

clicking a button on the Task Menu. It will also be disabled for all launch windows other than the Primary launch window.

NOTES

1: The Task Menu buttons operate dynamically. That is to say that buttons will change size if the title of the window changes.

2: The buttons are sorted alphabetically when they are created, however, they may not move if the title of a window changes.

Hide on Escape if set, will cause the Launch Window to vanish when the escape key is pressed, but only if no drop-down file menus are open.

Hide on Launch if set, will cause the Launch Window to vanish whenever a Launch button is used to open an application (or utility, etc.) This feature is provided mainly for use with multiple Launch Windows, and in particular with small “Tool-Windows”.

Auto-hide if set, will cause the Launch Window to vanish shortly after the mouse cursor is moved off the window. Whenever the mouse is moved over the remnant, the Launch Window will be displayed automatically.

NB: The Auto-hide facility of the Launch Window has to be temporarily disabled when certain events occur such as popup menus being displayed. In such cases, the mouse must be moved over the Launch Window to reenable Auto-hide. Furthermore, the Launch Window will not auto-hide if a drop-down file menu is open.

Auto Snap to Edge if set, will cause the Launch Window, to be grabbed by an edge if it is close enough (currently 24 pixels) after dragging. If a Launch Window is wider than high, it will be grabbed by the top or bottom edges, but a Launch Window that is taller than wide will be grabbed by either the left or right edges. If dragged within range of a corner, a Launch Window will be grabbed by the corner. If a Launch Window is so large that it occupies the entire width or height of the screen, it will snap to an edge however far it is dragged.

Auto Arrange if set, causes buttons, etc. to be rearranged whenever the Launch Window is resized. It should be noted that priority is given to the width chosen by the user. After rearrangement, the height will be minimised. The clock is always placed at the top right corner. When the user selects a new font for the Launch Window, buttons will be resized to take account of the font size. Using a large font will increase the display size of the icons of standard folder buttons, but the icons of other buttons, where the caption is placed below the icon, will be set according to the size suggested for a new button on the [Options](#) page. In fact, the minimum height of a folder button is determined by the **Folder** setting on the [Options](#) page too.

Auto open, if set will cause the Launch Window to open whenever the Launch Centre starts. This is not enabled for the primary Launch Window, since this will always open whenever the Launch Centre starts. It will be enabled for other Launch Windows and unless it is checked, the window will not open automatically when the Launch Centre opens. To manually open a Launch Window, select it from the **Window** submenu on the popup menu of the primary Launch Window.

Within the **Remnant** group is a button to change the colour of the remnant and a set of radio-buttons to control the position of the remnant. The remnant will always be placed on an edge of the work area of the screen. (The *work area* of the screen is that area free of application bars such as the *MS Office Bar* and the *Windows Taskbar* (also know as the *Tray*.) Horizontal Launch Windows will place the remnant on either the top or bottom edges of the screen, and vertical Launch Windows will place the remnant on either the left or right edges of the screen. The remnant will be aligned to either the top left corner of the Launch Window, or to the bottom right corner of the Launch Window, according to which setting the user chooses.

NOTES

1: Top / Left is the only recommended position.

2: If you choose **Off**, and the Launch Window vanishes, it can only be made to reappear by using its hotkey, or by selecting it from the **Window** submenu found on the popup menu of another Launch Window (if any). **Off** is not recommended until you are familiar with the Launch Centre.

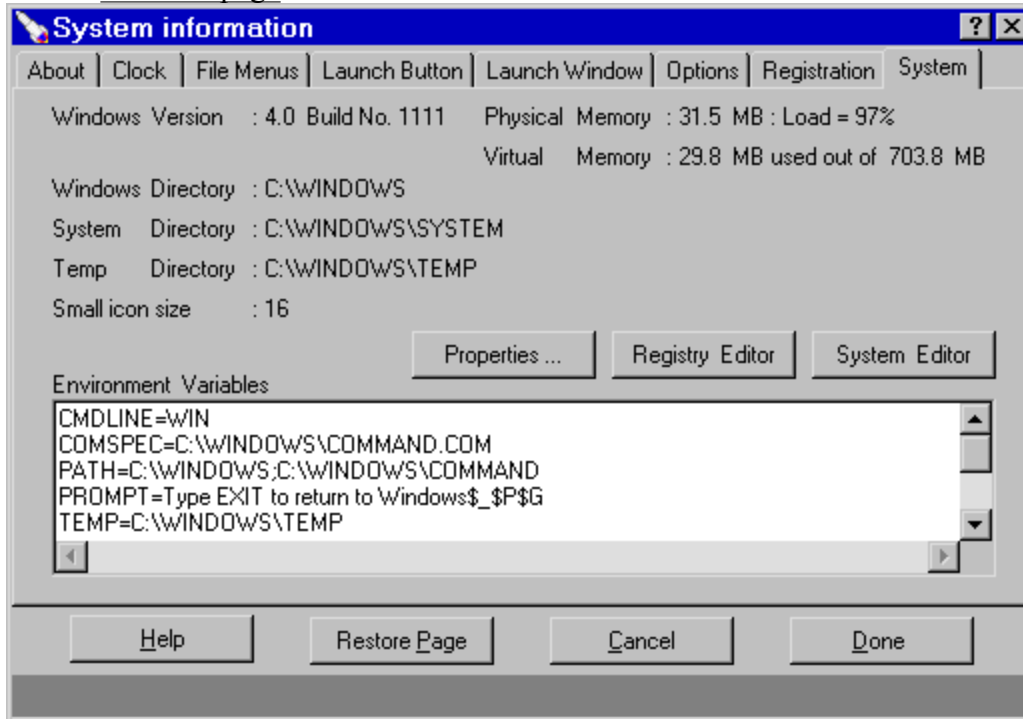
3: If you choose to enter a hint for the remnant, to activate the LaunchWindow, it is necessary to click the remnant rather than just move the mouse over it. This feature is intended for use where several Launch Windows are located on the same edge. It is also for this reason that the arrow buttons are provided to displace the remnant from its default position (aligned to a corner.)

The **Save Settings NOW** button causes all settings on this page together with all clock and launch button details (but not options) to be saved immediately. All information is stored in the Windows Registry. The settings of other Launch Windows are not saved.



Universal Dialog: System Page

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This page provides information about your computer's configuration.

The **Properties** button can be used to launch the Windows *System Properties* dialog. This is a multi-page dialog normally accessed through the Windows *Control Panel*. Buttons are also provided to launch the Windows *Registry Editor* and to launch the Windows *System Editor*. Also see the [Options](#) page.

Note that the Environment Variables (displayed alphabetically) are mostly a throw-back to Dos rather than being useful to Windows. However, the *Path*, *Temp* and/or *Tmp* variables are used by Windows and some may be created by Windows (e.g. for a sound card.) If in doubt, leave well alone. (To change the environment variables, you must edit the text files *Config.sys* and/or *Autoexec.bat* and reboot the computer.)

IMPORTANT

If you wish to edit registry entries that concern the Launch Centre, ideally you should do so by launching *Regedit.Exe* by some other means. However, provided that you close the Launch Centre and press F5 to refresh the registry data BEFORE adjusting any settings, all should be well. DO NOT edit the registry entries for the Launch Centre while it is open. Launch Centre settings are currently stored in the key **HKEY_CURRENT_USER | MaverickLC**. Also see [The Windows Registry](#).

NOTE: To set the environment variable *PROMPT* for dos windows, you must include a line in your *AutoExec.Bat* file that reads something like :-

Set WinPmt=Type EXIT to return to Windows\$_P\$G

You must read the panel on the actual about page of the Universal Dialog, not the snapshot in this help file.

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