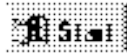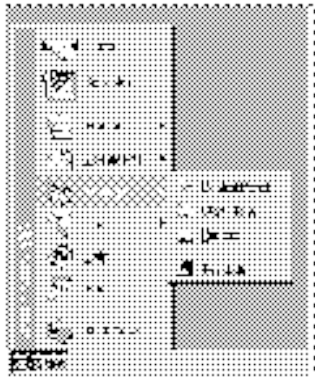# A Better User Interface

Easier to use, fewer user support calls

Windows 95 introduces a new user interface that makes using the personal computer easier and more efficient for users, regardless of their expertise.


Start Button

By clicking this button, novice users have access to nearly everything they need — from starting programs and documents, to changing computer settings, and getting help. The Start button provides an obvious starting point for the functions users perform on their computers every day —a more intuitive approach than Program Manager.

Desktop

The desktop makes it easy to find and use tasks and connections to resources. The Network Neighborhood icon provides a single namespace for viewing network servers and connections— just point and click to connect to the server you want.
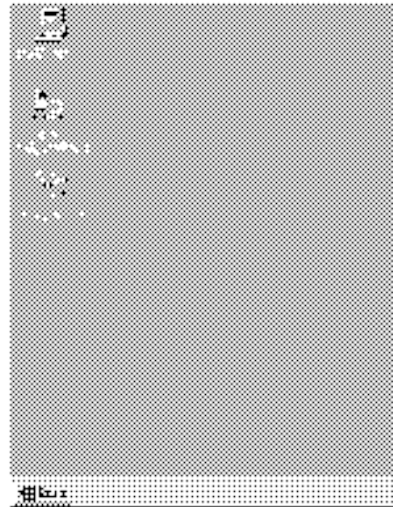
For information about customizing the user interface, see Chapter 5, "Custom, Automated and Push Installations," and Chapter 15, "User Profiles and System Policies."

Plug and Play

Easier to set up, add, and remove hardware

Plug and Play technology provides a logical and consistent framework for devices to identify themselves and configure their settings on the computer. With Plug and Play, Windows 95 makes it easier to set up new hardware and software.

Plug and Play Hardware

Windows 95 enables many new hardware devices that automatically configure themselves on the computer. Plug and Play devices choose settings such as IRQs or DMA channels, without requiring the administrator to set them. And, under Windows 95, Plug and Play devices can be added to a computer that doesn't have Plug and Play BIOS.
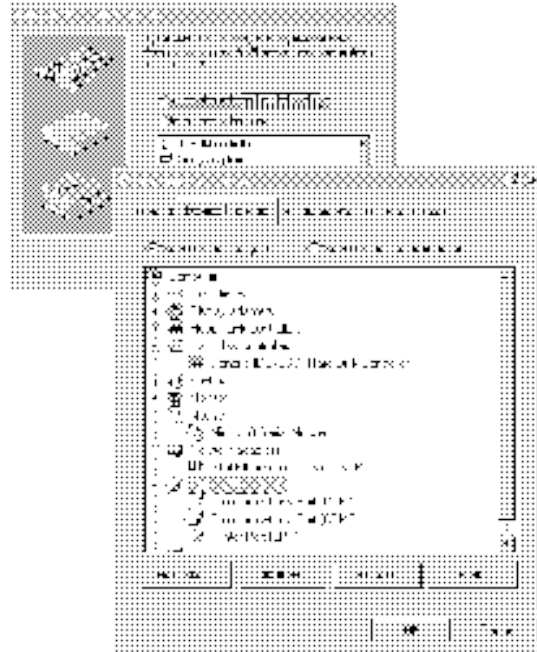
Tips for the administrator

- You can centrally control and customize the desktop with system policies and user profiles. For the rare cases where users are more comfortable with the Program Manager and File Manager, you can install these applications through Custom Setup.

Legacy Devices

Windows 95 simplifies setup and configuration of devices that aren't Plug and Play-compliant. By detecting legacy devices and migrating hardware settings to the Registry during installation, Windows 95 avoids overwriting legacy device settings when Plug and Play devices are added.

On-the-Fly Configuration for PCMCIA

Support for PCMCIA and portable "hot" docking and undocking means that users can add or remove a device such as a PCMCIA card while the computer is running. The computer automatically detects that the state of the hardware has changed and adjusts the system settings accordingly.

For more information about Plug and Play and hardware detection, see Chapter 6, "Setup Technical Discussion," and Chapter 19, "Devices." Also see Chapter 31, "Windows 95 Architecture."

Tips for the administrator

- Whenever you can, choose Plug and Play-compliant devices and components for your computers, whether or not they are legacy computers. Look for the "Designed for Microsoft Windows 95" logo.

- Plug and Play means the system selects and assigns values to hardware devices. To override these values, do so manually using Device Manager.

- Check for any known hardware issues in the README file for Windows 95 and modify your installation accordingly.

32-Bit Operating System Architecture

Greater system reliability and performance

The 32-bit architecture and superior resource handling in Windows 95 reduce downtime and support calls by providing a more stable operating system environment.

32-bit, Protected-Mode Subsystems

With 32-bit support for networking and all other subsystems under Windows 95, computers continue to run, even if the server goes down. Similarly, an errant application is less likely to stop the system, because 32-bit applications run in their own address space. And, for 16-bit applications, closing an errant process will not affect other programs.
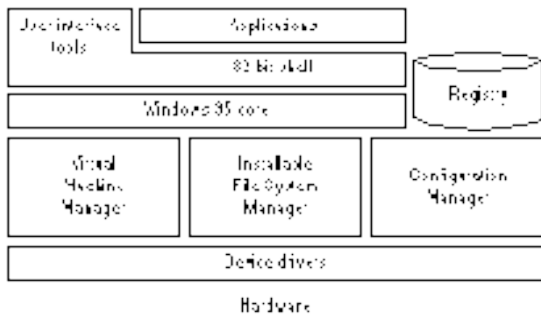

Expanded System Resources

Out-of-memory errors are not a practical issue in Windows 95 because the system resource constraints have been virtually eliminated. This lets your users run numerous applications without running out of memory.

Better Application Cleanup

Compared with Windows 3.1, Windows 95 does a better job of tracking program resources and cleaning up after an errant application stops. The freeing of system resources after an application shutdown means system performance is less likely to degrade over time.
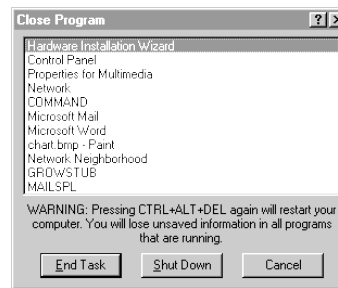
For more information, see Part 1, "Corporate Planning Guide," Chapter 20, "Disks and File Systems," Chapter 22, "Application Support," and Chapter 31, "Windows 95 Architecture."

Built-in Networking

Easy, powerful, and stable connectivity

Windows 95 comes complete with 32-bit
networking components to allow it to work
seamlessly with all major networks—including
Novell® NetWare® and Windows NT™ Server—
and other Windows 95 peer servers.

32-bit Networking Components

Windows 95 support for 32-bit components
includes the redirector, the protocol, the network
adapter, and File and Printer Sharing services.
Written to run in a multitasking environment,
these components take up no real-mode memory
and offer fast and stable networking.

Windows 95 comes with 32-bit versions of an
IPX/SPX-compatible protocol and TCP/IP (with
a DHCP client). A variety of other protocols and
16-bit network clients are also supported.
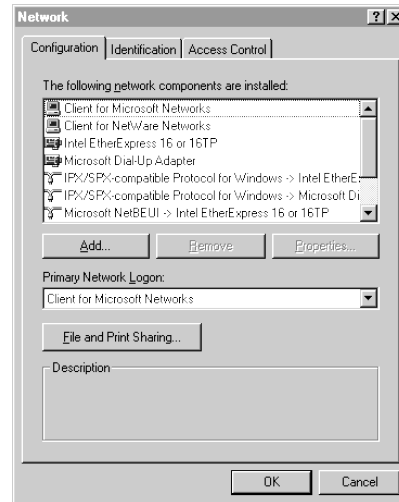
Tips for the administrator

• Although system components are
predominantly 32-bit, for compatibility reasons
Windows 95 also offers support for a variety
of 16-bit component options. For example, the
existing 16-bit network redirector for Novell is
supported. Read the Corporate Planning
Guide to understand choices and trade-offs in
detail.
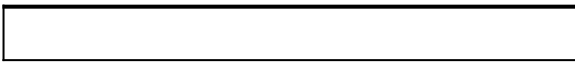
Network Neighborhood

With Network Neighborhood, users can browse network servers—even those from different network vendors—all in a single namespace. And, with support for universal naming convention (UNC) pathnames, it's as easy to access resources on the network as it is those on the local hard disk.

For more information, see Part 3, "Networking," and Chapter 32, "Windows 95 Network Architecture."

Tips for the administrator

- Use 32-bit protected-mode networking software components instead of the real-mode equivalents to ensure speed and stability. You'll need to evaluate whether to upgrade your NetWare protocols and client software to 32-bit. Issues of compatibility with certain programs are the only reasons you may choose not to upgrade your real-mode components.

- You need to use Windows NT Server to take advantage of DHCP autoconfiguring options and WINS name-resolution capabilities if you are moving to TCP/IP as your strategic protocol.