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What Is Wcron?

Wcron is a periodical task scheduler.

It is inspired from the popular cron tool of <u>Unix systems</u>.   Most Unix systems depend a lot on cron.

Cron (and Wcron for that matter) is most useful on machines that runs 24 hours a day.   Wcron lets you specify the time of execution of a specific <u>task</u>.   It can be used for one shot or periodical executions.

Starting Wcron

Wcron can be started in several ways.

1) The Run... command in the File Menu of the Program Manager and File Manager can be used to start the program.

2) If Wcron was been imported into the Program Manager then double clicking on the icon will start the program.

3) From the File Manager, double clicking on the Wcron entry will start the program.

4) From within WinCLI,   WinCLI Pro,   4WIN or other command line interface for Windows changing the current directory to the one Wcron is stored in and typing "wcron" will start the program.   Note: if the directory where Wcron is stored is in the PATH environment variable, you do not need to CD to that directory before typing "wcron".

5) You can put Wcron in the LOAD= of the WIN.INI file so that it is started every time you start Windows.   In Windows 3.1 you can just drag Wcron's icon into the StartUp group to perform the same task.

The main window of Wcron consist of a list box which shows, in alphabetical order, the task list you created.   The first time you start Wcron, the task list will be empty.

When starting, Wcron writes the time and date to the logfile.

Adding A Task

Clicking on the "Add..." button in the main window will bring you to <u>the edit task dialog box</u> with default values for each <u>fields</u>.

Removing A Task

Clicking on the "Remove" button in the main window will remove the <u>task</u> from the list in memory and will delete it from the <u>crontab</u>.

Editing A Task

Clicking on the "Edit" button or double clicking on a <u>task</u> brings you to <u>the edit task dialog box</u> with the information concerning that task.

The Edit Task Dialog Box

Fields
Options
Buttons

Fields

Description
Minute
Hour
[Day](Day)
Month
Day of week
Command
Starting directory

Description Field

The description is the text which appears in the <u>task</u> list.   This field is **not** optional.   You cannot click on the OK button unless you enter a description.   You will always refer to the description of a task to edit or modify it.   The description must be **unique**.   Giving tasks significant description helps when searching in a long list of tasks.

Examples:

Backup systems files
Remind business diner
Trim log files

Minute Field

The minute field specifies the minutes of the <u>hour</u> at which the task will be executed. Numbers range from 1 to 60.   The asterisk means every minute.   This field is optional, default is asterisk.

Examples:

15	Minute 15
15,30,45	Minute 15, 30 and 45
15,30,45-50	Minute 15, 30 and range 45 to 50
*	Every minute of the hour

Hour Field

The hour field specifies the hours of the <u>day</u> at which the task will be executed. Numbers range from 0 to 23.   The asterisk means every hour.   This field is optional, default is asterisk

Examples:

8	8 am
16	4 pm
8,16	8 am and 4 pm
0,8,12-14,22	Midnite, 8 am, noon to 2pm and 11 pm
*	24 hours a day

Day Field

The day field specifies the days of the <u>month</u> on which the task will be executed. Numbers range from 1 to 31.   For months with less that 31 days, values larger that the maximum days of the month will be ignored.   The asterisk means every day.   This field is optional, default is asterisk.

Examples:

1	1st
3,15,27	days 3, 15 and 27
16-20	every day between the 16th and 20th
*	Every day of the month

Month Field

The month field specifies the months of the year on which the task will be executed. Numbers range from 1 to 12.   The asterisk means every month.   This field is optional, default is asterisk.

Examples:

3	February
4,7,9	March, July and September
5 9-12	April and September to December
*	Every months

Day Of Week Field

The day of week field specifies the day of the week on which the task will be executed. Numbers range from 0 to 6, 0 being Sunday.   The asterisk means every day of the week.   This field is optional, default is asterisk.

Examples:

1	Monday
2-4	Tuesday through Thursday
0,6	Week-end
*	All week.

Command Field

The command field is the command to run with its parameters.   This field is **not** optional.   You cannot click on the OK button unless you enter something in this field.

The command can be a Windows executable (.EXE), a DOS executable (.EXE or .COM), a DOS batch file (.BAT) or a Windows Program Information File (.PIF).

If no extention is specified, .EXE is assumed.

The search path is the 'windows' directory, the Windows 'system' directory and then the standard DOS path.   It is also possible to specify the full pathname of the command.

Note: To run a DOS application with the "Minimize"   or the "Hidden"option you will have to create a Program Information File (PIF) for the application and check the "Background" checkmark.   You then enter the .PIF file in the command field instead of the real DOS program name.   Otherwise if run minimized, the icon of the DOS application will show up but the application will be held util the user double click it's icon.   If run hidden, the application will be held up forever!

Starting Directory Field

The starting directory field, if specified, will make Wcron change the current working directory when executing the task.   This is useful for programs that searche for files in the current directory and can't find them when started from an arbitrary path.   This field is optional.

Options

Available for each <u>task</u>. are:

Enable this task   This let you temporally shut down the execution of a task without removing it from the list.

Beep when launching   Wcron will beep when executing this task.

Confirm before launching If this option is on Wcron will ask the user to confirm the execution at launch time.   Use this for critical tasks.   Do **not** use this option with frequent periodical tasks unless you know there will be someone at the computer to confirm or deny the execution of the task.

Normal   The window of the task will show up in it's normal dimensions.

Minimized   The window of the task will show up minimized.

Maximized   The window of the task will show up maximized.

Hidden   No window will be visible when the application starts. It will run in the background without appearing on the screen.   **NOTE:**   be careful with this option.   If a task started this way crashes, you may never know about it.

Note: To run a DOS application with the "Minimize"   or the "Hidden" option you will have to create a Program Information File (PIF) for the application and check the "Background" checkmark.   You then enter the .PIF file in the command field instead of the real DOS program name.   Otherwise if run minimized, the icon of the DOS application will show up but the application will be held util the user double click it's icon.   If run hidden, the application will be held up forever!

Buttons

The edit task dialog box   contain six buttons:

Default   Reset field and check boxes to their default state.

Clear   Clears every fields in the dialog box.

Run   This is for testing the command.   When clicking on
                                   this button Wcron tries to execute the command and
                                   display an error message it failed.   Task options are
                                   used the same way as if Wcron were starting the task
                                   automatically.   For example, if "Enable this task" is
                                   off, this button will have no effect.   **Note: Clicking
                                   on the "Run" button saves the task's
                                   information in the crontab BEFORE actually
                                   running the task.   In other words, it performs
                                   the same as clicking on "Ok" without closing
                                   the dialog.   Therefore, clicking on "Cancel"
                                   after clicking on "Run" will NOT undo the
                                   changes you may have made.**

Browse   Clicking on this button will open a file requester and
                                   let you browse for a Command.

Help   Bring the index of this file.

OK   Save changes to the crontab and returns to the
                                   tasklist window.

Cancel   Cancel changes and returns to the tasklist window.

The Logfile

The logfile created by Wcron is named "WCRON.LOG".   It is created in the Windows directory by default.   You may change that by setting it in the <u>Options</u> dialog.

The logfile contain useful informations on the execution of Wcron and the <u>tasks</u> that it launches.   Dates and time of executions, modifications, deletion an addition are stored in it as well as return codes of failed executions.

Normally the logfile does not get very large but for heavy usage of Wcron it is recommended to <u>trim</u> the file regularly.

System Menu

Options   Set Wcron options.
Exit   Exit Wcron

Option Menu

When choosing this menu item, an options dialog will open.

Available options are:

Show icon

You may choose to hide Wcron icon when you minimize it so it won't appear on the bottom of your screen.   When this option is on and the program is minimized it will no longer appear in the task list of the task manager but it is still running.   To get Wcron back, run it again; it won't run a second instance, it will just get the hidden one back.

Show title

Show the program title when minimized.

Show time

Show the current time when minimized.

Show date

Show the current date when minimized.   You may choose between short or long date format.

Wcron ON/OFF

Check the OFF checkmark to disable Wcron.

Store log info

Check if you want Wcron to store log informations.

Browse

Click on this button to browse for a new logfile.

Exit Menu

This option exits Wcron.   You can also quit by double clicking on the close gadget or hitting Alt+F4.

Exiting Wcron does not affect <u>tasks</u> that has been previously started by Wcron and are still running.   Those tasks will continue to run until they are finished or terminated manually.

When exiting, Wcron writes the time and date to the <u>logfile</u>.

Help Menu

Index

Open the Wcron Help file and go to the main index card.

Getting Started

Open the Wcron Help file and go to the "Getting Started" section.

Adding a task

Open the Wcron Help file and go to the "Adding A Task" section.

Removing a task

Open the Wcron Help file and go to the "Removing A Task" section.

Editing a task

Open the Wcron Help file and go to the "Editing A Task" section.

Register

Open the Wcron Help file and go to the "Registration Form" section.   We ask you to print this form, fill it out and send it along with your payment to Cinétic Systems.   See the Contact section to learn about how to contact us.

About Wcron

This function will open a dialog box containing informations about the author and registration informations.   It also displays Windows version, Windows mode, DOS version, processor type and free memory.

External Utilities

Here are some little utilities included with Wcron:

Reminder
Trimfile

Reminder

Reminder (remind.exe) is a simple program that pops a message box with the message given as parameter in it.   The date and time appear in the caption of the message box.

You can use it with Wcron to remind you of something at a specific time and date.

Example:

    You have a meeting at 10:00 am on the 11th of July and you want to be reminded 10 minutes before.

Description	Meeting with John Doe
Minute	50
Hour	9
Day	11
Month	7
Day of Week	*
Command	remind Meeting with John Doe at his office at 10:00.

Trimfile

Trimfile (trimfile.exe) is a useful utility to trim files to a certain number of lines.   It is a DOS and Windows program so you can run it in both environments.   The advantage of running it in Windows is that you can automatically run it in multitask once a day on growing files.

The format is:

Trimfile [-<nb. of lines>] file1 file2 ... filen

The default for <nb. of lines> is 100 if not specified.

Example:

Description	Trim log files
Minute	0
Hour	8
Day	*
Month	*
Day of week	*
Command	trimfile -250 c:\windows\wcron.log

Glossary

Cron
Crontab
Task
Unix system
WinCLI

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>   Cinétic Systems
>   4933 Verreau,
>   Montreal, Quebec
>   Canada
>   H1M 2C7
>
>   Internet: Cinetic@Speedy.CAM.ORG
>   Compuserve: 71640,666

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You are granted a limited license to copy Wcron only for the trial use of others subject to the terms of this software license agreement described herein, and the conditions described below are met:

Wcron MUST be copied in an unmodified form and MUST contain the following files:
    wcron.exe
    wcron.hlp
    bwcc.dll
    commdlg.dll
    remind.exe
    trimfile.exe
    readme.txt

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Operators of electronic bulletin board systems (Sysops) may post Wcron for downloading by their users without written permission only as long as the above conditions are met.   A fee may be charged for access to the bbs as long as no specific fee is charged for downloading Wcron files without first obtaining express written permission from Cinétic Systems to charge such a fee.

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Contacts

Wcron is marketed and supported by Cinétic Systems.

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Credits

Wcron was developped by Cinétic Systems.

The following people have contributed to the development of Wcron:

Software Engineer:
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Technical Consulting:
Philippe Blais
Matthew Dillon
Eric Trépanier

Beta Testing:
Philippe Blais
Hans Laroche
Eric Trépanier
Robert Salesas

Special Thanks to:
Robert Salesas

Other Products

Other products available from Cinétic Systems includes:

WINMAIL

A mail reader/composer for Windows.   This program acts as a front end to Unix mail packages for DOS.   Version 1.2a support UUPC/extended, FSUUCP , WAFFLE and even Unix remote mail servers.   WinMail helps you organize mailboxes of users with it's multiple functions (read, mail, reply, forward, delete, undelete, save, and more...). WinMail is shareware and is available from Cinétic Systems at the low cost of $30 US ($35 CDN).   WinMail is available on Compuserve in the Advanced Windows section. To retrieve it type "go   Winadv" and go to the library section 3, then do a browse using the keyword WINMAIL.   It is also available on the Internet via anonymous FTP on the machine sun.soe.clarkson.edu in the /pub/uupc/winmail directory.   It is also available on numerous machines around the world.   To get the complete list, send a message to archie@quiche.cs.mcgill.ca with a subject line (or the first line of the message) reading "prog winmail".

TEAMTRIS

This exiting new variant of the most popular game of the world let you play in four different mode, one of which is a "team" mode where two players plays on the same large board.   You have to work together instead of being in competition with teach other.   Of course, there is also the classic one player mode, the "competition" two player mode and a special one player "large board" mode.   This DOS based game requires a VGA color or monochrome display adapter.   Teamtris is FREEWARE.   It is available on Compuserve in the IBM New User section.   To retrieve it, type "go ibmnew" and go to the "Gen fun & Games" section (library 6) then do a browse using the keyword TEAMTRIS.

Registration Form

Wcron version   2.1a

Registration number (reserved):

Please print this page and fill it out with required informations
Note: For site-licence registration please contact Cinétic Systems.

Last name: _____   First name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____   State or province: _____

Zip or postal code: _____   Country: _____

Voice Phone: _____

Your E-Mail address (if applicable): _____

Your Compuserve ID (if applicable): _____

Computer Type: _____

From where did you acquire Wcron?

_____

Comments?

_____

Number of Wcron Registrations   _____ X $25 US   ($30 Cdn)
                                 _____

Signature: _____

Make check payable to Cinétic Systems.

Cron

Standard tool on Unix systems.   Most Unix systems depend on the execution of cron to start regular tasks, make backups and cleanups, start regular connection to a host in a network and do other important background tasks.

Crontab

File where the task list and thecorresponding execution informations for execution time is stored.   In the case of Wcron, the crontab is named "WCRON.INI" and is a standard Windows ".INI" file.   It stores more informations than standard Unix crontabs, however. Task options and global options are also kept in it.

Task

In this document we use the word "task" to designate a Windows program or a DOS command   Wcron has to execute at some specific time.

WinCLI / WinCLI Pro

WinCLI is a command line interface for Windows.   It acts like a DOS in a window but takes a lot less memory than a real DOS window.   It also packs a lot of useful features such as command line history, command line editing and more...

WinCLI Pro is the commercial version of WinCLI.   It has over 30 commands, unlimited command line history, aliases, stackable commands, clipboard support, complete help system, adjustable virtual width and height, an interface for Pascal and C programmer plus much, much more...

WinCLI and WinCLI Pro are developped by Eschalon Development Inc.

You can contact Eschalon Development Inc. at the addresses below:

110-2 Renaissance Square
New Westminster, BC.
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Tel/Fax: (604) 520-1543

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Unix System

The term "Unix system" is being used to designate any computer running under the Unix operating system.   Most workstation such as Sun Sparcstations and Apollos run under Unix and some personal computers such as the Amiga 3000 and 80386 PC compatible systems have implementations of the Unix operating systems.