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Tired of all those TEXT files of various and sundry Creators lying around, with boring, blank document icons because *you* don't have the application with which they were created? Don't you wish you could launch your favorite word processor by double-clicking on an orphan document, regardless of it's pedigree? No? Well we were.. uh, did.

That's why we created CrossLaunch™, a nifty little CDEV of dubious utility which is certain to change your life... or at least your desktop.

What Is CrossLaunch™?

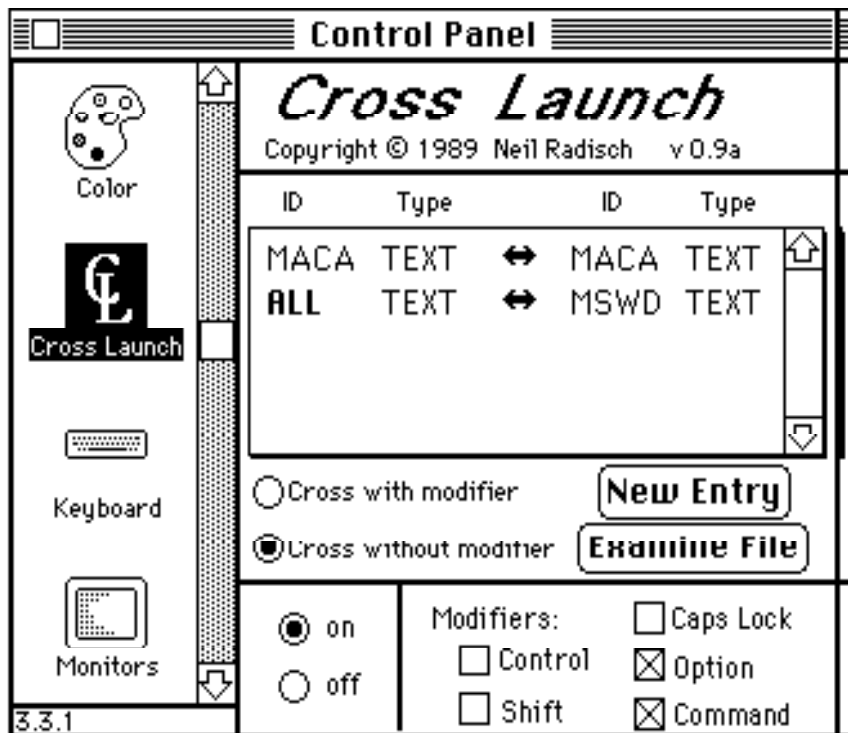
Well, it's a hell of a lot easier to use than it is to describe. Basically, CrossLaunch™ is a CDEV which patches the System so as to trick the Finder into believing that files of specified Creator IDs and/or Types are actually of another specified Creator ID and/or Type. Got it?

Essentially, CrossLaunch™ lets files masquerade as the file of their choice. For example, CrossLaunch™ could be configured so that all TEXT files, regardless of their Creator ID, will appear to you (and the Finder) as if they were created by Microsoft Word. Thus double-clicking on any TEXT file will now launch Word. Nifty, huh?

Using CrossLaunch™:

To install CrossLaunch™ place it in the System folder and reboot.

To configure CrossLaunch™, simply open the Control Panel DA and select the CrossLaunch™ icon. You will see the following control dialog:



CrossLaunch™ Entry Field:

A scrolling field lists all of your CrossLaunch™ entries. The ID and Type listed on the left of each line are that of the file you wish to mask; the ID and Type listed on the right are that of file you wish to masquerade as.

To edit an entry, select the ID or Type item you wish to change (either by double-clicking or click-dragging), and retype it. You may also Tab through all items on the current line.

To set an ID or Type item to **ALL**, delete the contents of the item and leave it blank. The word **ALL** will appear when the item is de-selected.

To delete an entry line, select the entire line by clicking on the CrossLaunch™ double-arrow in the center of the line, and select Cut from the Edit menu (⌘X). The Delete key will not work.

The order in which entries are positioned in the list is important. CrossLaunch™ scans through the list from top to bottom to find a match for files to be masked. Once a match is found, the following entries are ignored. Thus in the example above, all files of type TEXT will be masked as if their Creator ID were MSWD, *except* for those with the Creator ID of MACA. If the position of the two entry lines were reversed, *all* TEXT files would be masked as if their Creator ID were MSWD, even those of MACA.

New Entry Button:

Select the New Entry button to create a new entry in the scrolling list.

Examine File Button:

Select the Examine File button to display the Creator ID and Type of a particular file. If the file chosen is an application, it will also show all other Types associated with the application.

Cross With/Without Modifier:

If Cross With Modifier is selected, CrossLaunch™ will only function when the specified modifier keys are used. (Note: this option is only of limited usefulness. See "Pseudo-Technical Info" below.)

Modifier Keys:

Selects the combination of modifier keys to be used when Cross With Modifier is the selected option.

On/Off:

Turns CrossLaunch™ on or off. At least that's intuitive.

Changes take place immediately upon exiting the CrossLaunch™ dialog in the Control Panel... well, sort of.

Pseudo-Technical Info:

CrossLaunch does not actually change the Creator ID or Type of any file; it merely deceives the Finder (and possibly other applications) at the point in which the Finder reads the Creator and Type information about the file. This occurs when the Finder displays the file on the desktop, *not* when the file is launched.

This is important to keep in mind, because it creates several apparent quirks (we prefer to call them "features").

First, files already displayed on the desktop in open folders will not show recent changes made in the Control Panel, because these files were already masked to the previous settings. To see the effects of the recent changes, you must either close the folder and reopen it, or reboot your computer. Likewise, the modifier keys will have no effect on these displayed files, regardless of the settings. For the modifier keys to have effect, they must be invoked at the time the Finder reads in the info, which is when the file is created or displayed (when the folder in which it resides is opened).

Second, while CrossLaunch™ does not change the Creator ID or Type of any *existing* file, it *may* change the ID and Type of new files when they are created. Or it may not (CrossLaunch™ patches only those traps absolutely necessary to trick the Finder... other applications may work differently). In addition, other applications (such as ResEdit) may inadvertently change the ID and Type under circumstances that give me a headache to try to explain. If you duplicate a masked file under the Finder, the new copy will be created with the apparent ID and Type, rather than the actual ID and Type of the original.

*** Disclaimer:**

CrossLaunch™ as it appears in this alpha release, was originally created for internal use. While the workings of it appear stable (though we make no guarantees), the interface was admittedly slapped together in a hurry, and is thus, kind of stupid. In fact, we're kind of ashamed. So don't think too poorly of us... we're capable of better.

If you have any suggestions on how to make CrossLaunch™ better, please let us know.

Legal Stuff and Self-Promotion:

CrossLaunch™ is copyright ©1989 by Neil Radisch. This program is currently Freeware, although we reserve the right to charge a fee for future versions. CrossLaunch™ and it's companion file CrossLaunch™ Docs, must be distributed together and at NO charge (commercial online services may charge standard connect fees). We make no guarantees on this software whatsoever... so please, use at your own risk!

A shareware final version of this program will be available shortly. We will also be releasing Staircase™ 2.0, a CDEV which adds extended "WalkDown Menus" to all applications, and Escape! an INIT which maps the escape key as the default for the cancel button in most dialogs. We also have several commercial products coming out soon, which I'd love to brag about, but the publishers won't let me yet. Oh well.

Who are we? Neil Radisch & David Goldstein, an independent development team based in NYC. We work in C, Pascal, assembly, HyperCard and any other development system you might prefer. If you'd like to contract our services, inquire about our products (publishers welcome), or send us comments or bug reports, please contact David Goldstein or Neil Radisch at:

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