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Greg's Browser 2.2 (10 May 1994)
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CompuServe: 73131,3326
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REGISTRATION FEE: US \$20 or UK £12

Do you think the Finder is too slow and clumsy when navigating through your folder structure? Do you perhaps use a hierarchical Apple menu utility but are tired of zigging and zagging your mouse from submenu to submenu? Or maybe you just like color icons. If so, then you should try Greg's Browser. Displaying multiple folders in a single window, Greg's Browser lets you simultaneously see the contents of a folder, its parent, and a subfolder, providing a quick and easy way of moving both up and down through your folder hierarchy.

Changes in this documentation file since version 2.1 are marked with italics.

This version of Greg's Browser works only on Power Macs. There is a separate version for 680x0 based Macs.

Basic Usage

To select a file or folder, just click once on its name in the file lists. If you select a folder, the Browser displays its contents in the file list immediately to the right. If there is not space for another file list, the Browser slides all the file lists left to make room. You can select multiple files simultaneously by holding down the <shift> or <command> keys while clicking. The Browser draws a 3D border around the active file list, and at the bottom of the window it displays the icon, name, and various other information about the currently selected files.

Double clicking on an entry in the file lists opens the selected files or folders just like in the Finder. In particular, this action launches applications, opens documents with their creators, and opens folder windows within the Finder. You can achieve the same result with the "Open" command in the File menu or its <command>-O keyboard equivalent.

To move back up through the folder hierarchy, click on the title box above one of the file lists. If you click and release quickly, the Browser slides the file lists to the right by one position. If you hold the mouse down, the Browser pops up a menu letting you choose how far you want to move up the folder structure. When you release the mouse, the Browser slides the file lists right repeatedly until it displays the folder you selected. From the keyboard, you can hit <esc> or <clear> to slide the file lists right by one position.

To change the name of the selected file, either click on the file name at the bottom of the Browser window or press the <return> key. Clicking anywhere else in the window or pressing the <return> or <tab> keys saves your changes to the file name and updates the file lists accordingly. To cancel editing the file name without making any changes, press the <esc> key.

Bookmarks

The row of icons at the top of the window and the trash icon at the lower right act as "bookmarks", letting you jump quickly to a file or folder that you use frequently. To add a new bookmark, drag the desired file or folder from its file list and drop it on one of the empty spaces at the top of the window. To move a bookmark from one slot to another, just drag it from its former position to one of the remaining empty spaces. To remove a bookmark, drag it away from the top of the window so that its shadow disappears; you need not drag it to the trash. The Desktop and Trash bookmarks are fixed in their positions and cannot be removed.

If you click once on a bookmark, the Browser jumps to the corresponding position in the file lists. If you hold down the <option> key while clicking an alias bookmark, the Browser resolves the alias and jumps to the position of the original file in the file lists. If you double click a Bookmark, the Browser opens the bookmark file as if you had double clicked it in the Finder. Note that double clicking will also jump to the bookmark position in the file lists (since to click twice, you must first click once). To open the bookmark file without jumping to it in the file lists, single click the bookmark while holding down the <command> key.

You can also drag files from the file lists and drop them on previously installed bookmarks (provided that the bookmark represents a folder or an application that can open the selected files). This provides a quick way of moving

or copying files to a drop folder or opening files with your favorite drop box mini-applications, such as “Stuffit Expander” or any of the various Finder info editors. Pressing the <delete> key is equivalent to dragging the currently selected files and dropping them on the trash bookmark.

Drag and Drop

The Browser lets you drag files directly from their file lists and drop them onto folders or applications in any other file list (even if it is contained in a different Browser window). Whenever you can drop the files onto a folder or application, the Browser will highlight the corresponding mini-icons as you drag over the file list entry. The rules for drag and drop are the same as in the Finder: Dragging moves files if the source and destination are on the same volume, but copies if they are on different volumes. Holding down the <option> key at the start or end of a drag forces the Browser to do a copy, except if you are dragging to the trash. Hey, I didn't invent these rules.

If your system has the “Macintosh Drag and Drop” extension installed, you can drag files between the Browser and other drag-savvy applications. In particular, the Finder in System 7 Pro (and all subsequent releases) supports the Drag Manager, so you can drag files directly from the Browser lists to Finder folders and vice-versa. Please note that in order to do this, you must install the “Macintosh Drag and Drop” extension, which is currently available only from APDA or from companies that have licensed it for inclusion with their software. I have heard rumors that this extension will be included with System 7.5.

File Menu

The “New Folder” command creates a new folder titled “untitled folder” in the active file list of the frontmost Browser window and immediately lets you edit its file name.

The “Close Window” command closes the frontmost Browser window as if you had clicked in the close box. If you attempt to close the last Browser window, the Browser hides it and switches to the Finder instead. The window reappears when you switch back to the Browser.

The “Open”, “Print”, “Get Info”, “Sharing...”, “Duplicate”, “Make Alias”, and “Put Away” commands all act on the current selection in the frontmost Browser window and behave just like in the Finder.

The “Reveal” command switches to the Finder, highlighting those files that are currently selected in the frontmost Browser window (opening up their parent folder window in the Finder if it is not already open).

If you hold down the <option> key while selecting from the File menu, the Browser changes “Get Info” and “Reveal” to “Get Original Info” and “Reveal Original”. If you select one of these commands, the Browser resolves any aliases in the current selection before performing the corresponding action.

Edit Menu

When you are not editing a file name, the “Copy” command copies to the clipboard a list of all the selected files in the currently active file list, and the “Select All” command selects all the files in the currently active file list.

When you are editing a file name, the commands in the Edit menu behave like you expect them to.

The “Preferences...” command brings up a dialog box where you can modify the following settings:

/ Show Invisible Files

When this box is checked, the Browser shows files that are marked as invisible. Such files, which include desktop databases, custom folder icons, and the famed “AppleShare PDS”, do not appear in Finder windows. Note that in order to move, copy, or trash these files, you must first make them visible using the “Invisible” command in the Label menu.

/ Confirm <delete> Key

When this box is checked, the Browser puts up a caution alert whenever you hit the <delete> key to move a folder to

the trash. This is in case you press <delete> by accident. Although such mistakes can easily be undone by dragging files out of the trash, it can be disconcerting to have your files magically disappear from their folder.

/ Display Splash Screen

When this box is checked, the Browser puts up its "About..." box for two seconds when you launch it. This is as close as I get to the proverbial "Annoying Shareware Message".

/ Show File Version Info

When this box is checked, the Browser shows the file version number (if the file has one) at the bottom of the window. This can slow down disk access, particularly with slow media such as floppy disks or CD-ROMs.

The "Font" and "Size" pop-up menus let you choose the font and size for the file lists and bookmarks. The information at the bottom of the screen remains in Geneva 9. If you check the "Anti-aliased (smoothed)" box, the Browser uses the corresponding TrueType font to smooth out the jagged edges of the font. For this option to work, you must have a monitor set to 16 grays or better, and your chosen font must have a TrueType version installed. Anti-aliasing takes time, so this feature is only recommended for those with fast Macs (25MHz 68040 or better), and it looks best at high (>88 dpi) resolutions.

Label Menu

The Label menu works just like it does in the Finder. In addition, the "Invisible" command lets you toggle whether the selected files are visible or invisible. Files marked as invisible do not appear in Finder windows, but you can still see them in the Browser if the "Show Invisible Files" option in the "Preferences" dialog box is checked. The "Invisible" menu item will be disabled if the "Show Invisible Files" option is turned off.

Special Menu

The "New Browser" command opens up a new Browser window staggered slightly to the right and below the current window. This new window opens directly to the active folder shown in the current window. Multiple Browser windows come in handy when you want to move or copy files. You can use the first window to navigate to the files that you want to move and the second to navigate to their destination.

If the current selection is an alias file and you hold down the <option> key while selecting the "New Browser" command, the Browser resolves the alias file and opens a new window showing the path to the original file.

The "Empty Trash", "Restart", and "Shut Down" commands work just like they do in the Finder.

Other Neat Stuff

If you resize the window to be wide enough (almost but not quite the full width of a standard 13" or 14" screen), the Browser will switch from three file lists to four and from six bookmarks to eight. It will also use some of the extra space at the bottom of the window to show the creation and modification dates for the currently selected files.

If you click the Zoom Box at the right end of the Browser window's title bar, the Browser window collapses. Clicking the Zoom Box again returns it to its normal size.

For those of us without extended keyboards, the Browser uses the numeric keypad to simulate the scrolling keys "Home", "End", "Page Up", and "Page Down". I'll leave it up to you to figure out which numbers do what.

Shareware Info

Greg's Browser is shareware; it is NOT free. If you use it regularly for more than two weeks, you should complete the enclosed registration form and send it to me with your payment of US\$20 or UK£12. You can also register online using CompuServe (in which case CompuServe gets 15% of the fee) by typing "GO SWREG". The registration ID for

Greg's Browser is 1304.

Although I have raised the price from previous versions, those of you who have already registered do NOT need to send me any additional payment (just pat yourself on the back for making a good investment). If you have not yet registered but think that this version is overpriced, please let me know how I can improve it to make it worth the fee.

I understand if you have trouble converting foreign currencies, are an impoverished student, or have trouble dealing with your company's bureaucracy, and if that is the case, then just try your best. From my previous experiences, I estimate that about 1 in 20 people registers the shareware that (s)he uses regularly, perhaps much less, so if you have ever wanted to rise above the rest of humanity, here is your chance!

I do not send out announcements of new versions, nor will I send you a floppy disk with the latest update. Please do not give me a disk and then complain when I do not respond. Sorry to sound so mean, but I am a graduate student in mathematics, not a software publisher. Although it does not seem like a big deal to mail a postcard or copy a floppy disk, it becomes a pain to have to do so for several people every day, particularly when I'm preparing for exams or writing a thesis. Also, the time I spend trying to run a business detracts from the time I spend programming.

On the other hand, I respond to nearly all e-mail, and I will e-mail a copy of the latest version in stuffit/binhex format to anybody who e-mails me a request. However, that should rarely be necessary as I always upload the latest releases of my shareware to the internet archives, the CompuServe "MacSys" forum, and the ZiffNet/Mac "Download and Tech Support" forum.

Please note that although I plan to release new versions with significant enhancements and will attempt to fix problems that are brought to my attention, there is no guarantee that I will continue to support this product indefinitely. You should register because you think the copy currently sitting on your hard drive is worth the money, not in the expectation that I will fix the bug that is annoying you. If you have a complaint about this version, or worry that it might not support System 8.2 with QuickStep, AppleSeed, PowerLunch, and FastTalk, please do not register until I have addressed your concerns. In the interim, you can always drop me a note telling me what those concerns are and letting me know that you care.

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