RELEASE NOTES for beta version 2.07

This is the first beta release for RBrowser on OPENSTEP. This version is free until the end of the beta testing period   (MARCH1, 1998).   The actual release will be version 2.1, slated for Q1 1998. Pricing is TBD.

THIS RELEASE HAS AN FTP CLIENT ALSO. THIS PART OF RBROWSER IS ALPHA QUALITY. DO NOT USE IT UNLESS YOUR IMPORTANT FILES ARE BACKED UP!!!

REXEC ONLY:
due to a serious bug in the OPENSTEP kernel, there is a chance for a kernel panic during copying to local or opening remote files (which is the same action essentially). To avoid this problem, during these operations, make sure the Processes Panel is closed. I'm working on a solution to completely eliminate this problem.

Documentation is still work in progress.

Beta testers: please send bugs & feedback to **rbrowser@ddrummer.com**

Platform availability:
This version is only available on the Intel/NeXT/Sparc hardware and the Mach OS.
By the official release slated for Q1 1998, RBrowser will be
available for OpenStep on WindowsNT and Rhapsody. Whether OpenStep on
Windows95 can support RBrowser wil be eveluted after the NT and Rhapsody

ports. There will be a beta release for the Windows/Rhapsody versions too.

Protocols:
>   REXEC. With this protocol RBrowser
can only connect to those hosts which have the full compliment of UNIX
utilities installed. In this protocol, RBrowser actually talks to Bourne shell
on the remote host. This is why there is no need for any custom software on the
remote system, but the shell also has some limitations.
>>   FTP: With this protocol, RBrowser can connect (in theory) any machine
>>>   with at least a halfway decent FTP server. This protocol is not as rich
>>>   as REXEC, so you won't be able to do everything. Different servers
>>>   allow you to do more or less operations, but they all have the basics:
>>   Copying files back and forth, listing directories, etc...
>>   The FTP client has been tested on UNIX and NT. There is a lot of work
>>>   still to be done on it.

What protocol should I use?
>   Some systems will allow you to use both REXEC or FTP. If you are likely to
>>   Copy large files, use FTP, it will be faster. If you are doing UNIX admin kinda
>   stuff like copying, moving, renaming files, use REXEC.

WARNING WARNING WARNING WARNING WARNING
Do not run RBrowser as root, do not connect to the remote
host as root!!!!
WARNING WARNING WARNING WARNING WARNING

Things to be aware of:
RBrowser is very dependent on the amount of bandwith you have. If you are
sitting on a 10MBit/sec Ethernel link, you can pretty much do as you please.
Start as many operations as you want, copy lots of files at the same time.
However, if you have ppp on a 33K baud modem or even less, you have to

be careful not to do too many things at once. If you do, the underlying
network connection can get overloaded, and the app can hang.

Upgrades:

Filesystem is cached, which means that once you load a directory,
RBrowser will keep it in memory (until it is released or reloaded).
Next time you click on that directory, the cached copy will be displayed.
You can reload the directory from the remote machine any time by
<CONTROL> click ing either the browser cell or the icon of the
directory. Use the "Refresh Time Period" settings in the connection
preferences to customize refresh behavior. <COMMAND>u will reload
the connection whose window is key,   <COMMAND>U will reload all of them.

Local File Browser is now provided. Use it to copy from/to Local
by drag&drop.
SOCKS support.
Ability to abort loading large directories.

FTP client is also available.

abort loading large directories:
On some systems, there are large user directories that hold more than 10,000
entries. If your homedirectory sits in one of these large directories, RBrowser
will automatically load this directory when you log in. Use the KILL button
in the Processes panel to abort loading this directory.   The rest of the directories
will   load just fine.
(does not work on FTP yet).

SOCKS support:

RBrowser now has support for SOCKS version 4. If your company is firewalled,

you can use the SOCKS proxy server to enable RBrowser to connect to machines outside the firewall. For now, RBrowser only supports one proxyserver. Use the Global Preferences Panel to enter the ip address of the proxy server. Then, for each connection that needs SOCKS turn on the switch in the Connection Preferences Panel. (does not work on FTP yet).

Document opening:
All documents belonging to all apps are monitored and saved back if they changed (no more ObjectSourceLinksApps...) You can double click on an executable file (at your own risk, of course) and the file will be opened. Exercise caution about testing large executable files this way. This feature should to make it easy to edit scriptfiles.

File Copying:
It is possible that copying will fail and there is no error message. The file simply does not appear in the target directory. This could happen if some of the files being copied   are not readable or writable. Depending on the implementation of tar on the target machine tar might just silently fail in this situation.

Error reporting:
Some of the operations fail silently.   Deleting files is most prone to this. This is true in all of the protocols. For that reason, the directories that are potentially changed with the operation are always reloaded after the operation. One common way for a silent failure is when you are replacing a directory by dropping into its parent another directory with the same name. If some of the contents of the original directory are not writable the whole operation will (silently on some systems) fail. In this case, always check permissions!

REXEC only:
Some copying between different hosts will fail due to incompatibilities between

their versions of tar.   The default in RBrowser is to use /usr/bin/gnutar. This is probably the best version out there, so if it is available on the remote system you are connecting to, you should use it (see Connection preferences).

Progress Bar:
The progress bar is only accurate on large file transfers.
(does not work on FTP yet).

International character support:
In general these files will appear in the browser correctly, provided that the remote host uses one of the character encodings known to OPENSTEP. The most common one used by Solaris and HP-UX is ISO Latin-1.
If you copy   a file like this onto another host (or the local host) the filename may appear different due to a different encoding.
REXEC only:
File operations, including loading the directory WILL FAIL for sure if the remote shell is not eight bit clean.   It is encouraged to use ksh or zsh which are eight bit clean.

What to do if you are trying to do something and get the beachBall?
Maybe the remote host you are connected to is not responding.
Try logging in using telnet from the Terminal.   If the host is not responding correctly, RBrowser may get stuck on trying to talk to it. These connection attempts will time out usually after 60 seconds. After that everything will operate normally. If the attempt does not time out, you may have to kill RBrowser using the Processes menu from the Workspace and restart it.

I tried to kill a background process, but it would not go away
Depending on the reliability of your network connection some background processes can hang. If this happens, the only thing you can do is to restart RBrowser.