Help On Buster

Overview

Buster is a development tool for users of <u>Microsoft Visual Basic</u> version 2.
It helps improve your speed in developing applications.

FEATURES

Buster will load your custom controls at the touch of a button. Buster allows you to run any '.MAK' file at any time by double clicking on the project name in the File Manager.

Buster allows you to rename your projects in a proper format and does away with DOS constraints.

It will allow you to 'blast' multiple declare statements, constants and your own prepared code into your projects and abolish errors in such statements once they have been checked before.

It reduces frustration by allowing you to save your work before it is run and also allows automatic backup at predetermined intervals.

A 'Back-Up' can be made to conserve hard disk space and provide safety. This backup is in compressed format. Installation diskettes of your finished projects can be prepared with the help of Buster.

If you associate all files ending with .MAK with Buster (this is done in file manager by clicking on file and then associate) you may then run any project from file manager by double clicking on the project name.   The usual message "Cannot start more than one copy of the specified programme" is abolished forever.

Installation

It is suggested that Buster be installed in his own directory or sub directory.

Buster creates files which are stored in his own directory.   Some of these files are deleted.   Every efforts have been made to use unique names.   It is advisable to store Buster in his own directory for safety reasons.

Buster should be supplied as three files :-

BUSTER.EXE	The Executable Program
BUSTER.TXT	Additional Information
BUSTER.HLP	This Help File

The following files MUST be in your path :-

PIFEDIT.EXE	to create a PIF file. Usually found in the windows directory
COMPRESS.EXE	supplied with Visual Basic

Buster does not require any extra Custom Controls or Dynamic Link Libraries.

Configuration

<u>New Users</u>
<u>Buster's Ini File</u>

You have to supply Buster with the necessary parameters.   The full path for Visual Basic should be given.   If Visual Basic was installed using the defaults from Visual Basic set-up you can just leave the defaults in the configuration form.   The files WIN30API.TXT and WIN31EXT.TXT are found in the default directories, as per Visual Basic set-up if you have the professional edition of Visual Basic.   If you don't have these files on your hard disk you should type "NONE"   in the part provided.   Any other files which contain declare, sub or constant statements can be used instead of WIN30API.TXT and WIN31EXT.TXT once they are text files with no leading or trailing spaces before the beginning of new lines.   This means that if you have files e.g. from MicroHelp or other suppliers. they may be used instead of the standard two files. CONSTANT.TXT may also be used.

The configuration form pops up when you start Buster and then creates an initialisation file in the same directory as Buster.   You can re-configure Buster at any time by clicking on the misc. button and then the configure button.

If you associate all files ending with .MAK with Buster (this is done in file manager by clicking on file and then associate) you may then run any project from file manager by double clicking on the project name.   The usual message "Cannot start more than one copy of the specified programme" is abolished forever.

Other parameters for Buster are explained in the status bar at the bottom of the configuration form.

Controls

Custom controls supplied with Visual Basic have an extension .VBX They are usually installed in the windows/system directory. Buster automatically reads all these controls into a convenient list box. You may add other controls in any other directory by clicking on the add button after clicking on controls.

You may also add forms or modules you have created and saved to disk . If you need to add these modules to another project you just double click and they will be added to the current project.

You may select multiple files and custom controls to be sent into your current applications.

When custom controls are deleted from the list box they will be reloaded automatically when the 'Controls' button is next pressed if they are in the Windows/System directory.

Forms and other custom controls will not be automatically added when deleted.

Tip :- If there are custom controls in your Windows/System directory which will not load (e.g. Pen Control for those without Pen Windows) it is advisable to remove them from the Windows/System directory. This allows you to send all controls as one.

Projects

All the projects on your hard disk can be named and included in a list box which appears when you click on project.   You may therefore name your project "The Icon Works Sample Application Provided by Microsoft".   Double clicking on a project will cause Visual Basic to load the project.   If more than one project is selected you may only delete them but you may not be able to run projects all at once since Visual Basic will not allow you to do so.

Tip :- You may name all projects on your hard disk by clicking on MISC. and Project Search.

Code

Clicking on the button marked code gives you five choices. Private code is any code you choose to save. To save your own code click on private and then on edit . Whole functions bits of functions declarations routines or any thing else may be saved here.

The other choices will read the text file you chose as a source of code when configuring Buster and separate functions from constants etc.

You may select all the declared etc. and with one click of a button send them into your current project.

Tip - If you want to send all functions in the windows API files Buster will tell you that the selection is too large.   Select a few send them up click on the right mouse button and all those which have been sent will be hidden.   You can then send some more.

Files

This feature of Buster allows the user to associate files with specified programmes to run them and also allows you to decide how they will appear when they are launched.

You are given the option to name the same file with different names and run them in different window states.

Double click, click on 'Run' or press {Enter} to run.
Right Mouse button, click on 'Del' or press delete to remove from list.

Tip :- When naming your files note the check box which allows you to run selected files on start-up.

Shell

This feature of Buster allows the user to run any executable program and also allows you to decide how they will appear when they are launched.

You are given the option to name the same program with differently and run them in different window states.

Double click, click on 'Run' or press {Enter} to run.
Right Mouse button, click on 'Del' or press delete to remove from list.

Tip :- When naming your program note the check box which allows you to run selected executables on start-up.

Saving And Running

This button should be used instead of running your unfinished project from within Visual Basic. Your work will be saved before running.

This button also allows you to launch Visual Basic if it is not already running.

Miscellaneous

This Button is a gateway to other functions.

>Configure
>Mini Spy
>Project Search
>Icon Browse
>Ini Editor
>Store Project

The above six choices will be presented on selecting this button. A scroll bar, initially set to zero will also be visible. For timed saving of your work the scroll bar should be adjusted to display the interval in minutes for automatic saving.

Mini Spy

This is a little utility which allows you to find out a little bit more about other applications. To position the utility, move the form with caption 'Misc.' to the spot you would like the utility to appear, then launch the utility.

It is very helpful for programmers who want to write applications which need to know the state of other running applications (e.g. writing Buster For Visual Basic).

Project Search

This feature allows you to name all projects ending with extension '*.MAK' so that they appear in Buster's list of projects.

It will automatically search all selected drives for files ending with extension '*.MAK' and then you can scroll through the compiled list and name or re-name your projects.

Icon Browsing

This button will launch the Icon Manager. You will have to select the drives to search for icons in a little dialog box and then click on "Search".

Icon Manager is a drag and drop icon file manager. Editing Icons can be performed with the excellent Icon Works Sample program supplied with Visual Basic.

When the manager is launched, it will scan your hard disk for all icons (has been tested with 2,500 icons!). It then displays the icons as pages. At this stage, only the Exit button is available.

Dragging your first icon will display a row of buttons enabling you to perform file management functions.

Delete   Dragging here adds an icon to the delete list. Clicking here will stop Buster asking for confirmation before deleting the icon list. Note:- If you have turned this feature on all icons added to the list will be deleted. To turn this feature off add another icon to the list.

Copy   A list is built up for copying. You are allowed to select a directory for copying when you exit the manager.

Move   Same as copy icons are moved instead of being copied. May span drives

Clip   Copies icon to clipboard. Clicking here will run the clipboard viewer.

List   Builds a small list for the Mini Manager. This allows you to span pages in the manager. When a list is built, clicking here will show a little list box (this listbox is 'always on top'). You may the compare selected icons, preview selected icons by clicking on compare. The preview window will then be launched. Up to eight icons may be selected. Clicking on the preview form will change the backcolor of the form. Hold down the Ctrl key and click to have a white background.

INI File Editor

This utility allows you to directly edit 'INI' files.

You may change entries directly and then observe the effects it has on your application.

It automatically creates a back up file, "BUSINI.INI" in the directory where buster is installed.

If you wish to directly edit your Win.Ini, System.Ini etc., It is suggested that you make permanent back ups.

File Compression And Decompression

This feature of Buster will read '*.MAK' files and save all the forms and modules to a directory of your choice. Note that COMPRESS.EXE will automatically rename all files by replacing the last letter of the extension with the underscore character. This means that the rest of the filename must be unique. e.g. Buster.frm and buster.fra will both be saved to Buster.fr_ and one will overwrite the other.

There are two modes - Compression and Decompression.

To use :-
    1. Supply a destination directory. This is advisable even when backing up to a floppy disk. e.g.   A:\BUSTER.
    2. Supply a name for the index. e.g. BUSTER.CMP. (This is automatically done when a '*.MAK' file is read.
    3. You may add or remove files from the list available.
    4. If the list is not visible click on the button marked "List".
    5. Destination drives are selected from the drive combo box.
    6. Destination directory is selected, if it exists, by clicking on the small button next to the text box marked destination path.

You may just select files by clicking on the "Select" button. You have to supply a compressed index name.

The index file is a text file with format :-
    Non Compressed File Name
    Compressed File Name.

To check if compression was done without overwriting please open the file and read the list.

About Buster

Displays details about Buster. Double clicking on the Bullseye will display registration details.

Exit

This button exits Buster. It will exit Visual Basic as well if the defaults have been accepted when configuring the program.

If your work has not been saved you will have the opportunity to do so.

If the wall paper has been removed on start-up, it will be replaced on exit.

How To Register

Buster is written by a budding developer for other developers. You may use as you wish but please register. A message box is always available from the 'About Box' which shows how to register. Just double-click on the Bullseye icon.

Please send   **UK£ 20.00**   or   **US$ 40.00**   to :-

Dr B. Biney
12 Birling Road
Ashford
Kent
Great Britain, TN24   8BB

I can also be contacted by electronic mail :-

bbiney   Compuserve   100111,2330

OR

bbiney @ CIX.

Please send the following details :-
      Name
      Address
      Phone Number
      Diskette Type

All Comments will be welcomed !
Please support the shareware concept.

Buster's Ini File

The Ini File created by Buster is best left as is. Not much cross-checking is done.

Since Buster is written for programmers, there is little hope that this rule will be adhered to.

The funny symbol   "¥" is created by holding down the 'Alt Key' and then pressing 1, then 5 then 7 on the numeric keyboard.

You may make a back-up and try different settings but this should not be required and may lead to a GPF.!!!

It is quite easy to follow since Visual Basic defaults are used i.e. in the configuration form's code. A look at the source will show all.

It is much better to obtain the source code by registering.

New Users Of Buster

1   Create a directory for Buster   e.g. C:\BUSTER
2   Copy BUSTER.EXE and BUSTER.HLP into the created
      directory.
3   Run File Manager
4   Associate '*.MAK' with BUSTER.EXE.
5   Install Buster into the same group as Visual Basic is installed in
      under Program Manager.
6   Double Click on the Buster Icon.
7   The Configuration Form will appear. Make sure that -
      a.   The path for Visual Basic is correct.
      b.   The path for WIN30API.TXT and WIN31EXT.TXT are
      correct.
8   Accept all other choices and click on OK.
9   Buster will appear at the bottom of your screen.
10   Exit Buster to see the full effect of a launch.
11   Make sure you have displayed wallpaper on your desktop,
      especially something distracting. Now run a few copies of
      notepad, write, paintbrush or any other program.
12   Run Buster again.
13   Run File Manager (with Buster and Visual Basic running in the
      background) and double click on any valid Visual Basic '*.MAK'
      file.
14   It works. WONDER HOW HE DOES IT !!   SEND OF FOR
      YOUR REGISTRATION AT ONCE !!   Source code is included
      with registration. Double clicking on the Bullseye will reveal
      registration details.

Note. Buster is not disabled in anyway. The only nag is the about box you see when
running it the first time. Enjoy it and support it by sending in your regestration form.

Help - The Help Button   Launches this File

Microsoft Visual Basic - Copyright Microsoft Corporation

Windows API Calls In Text Format - Text File For API Calls as supplied with Visual Basic.