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Introduction

Chez Otto provide quick access to a large number of programs and utilities under Windows 3.1 using a combination of icons and radio buttons. This is a menu-only system.

Prerequisites

Chez Otto requires Windows 3.1 running in Enhanced mode.

Constraints

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The Chez Otto Window

CO is organized as follows:

:

- 10 iconic buttons (that you configure) across the top of the display window
- 5 preconfigured buttons underneath
- a center box of 20 configurable radio buttons, and
- 5 page icons along the bottom of the window

At the center - left is space for a logo of your choice.

The top row of 10 iconic buttons let you configure 10 programs to use that display icons. These can be either DOS or Windows applications. Here is a sample row:



The second row of 5 icons represent preset functions:

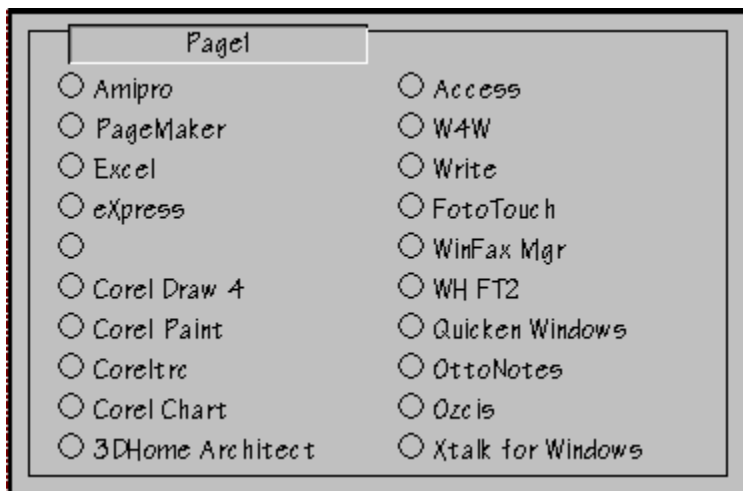


- * DOS prompt
- * Run a program dialog
- * See free drive space
- * Get Help on Chez O'
- * Exit! Windows

The text box at the upper right displays various pieces of information: Free System Resources, Date/Time or Display Resolution. Heres a sample Date/Time display:



The 20 radio buttons in the center also be configured to launch Windows and DOS programs.



The page icons at the bottom let you access additional 'pages' of 20 items. There are 5 pages for a total of 100 possible program items. Here are some sample icons:



To the right of the 20 radio buttons is the small **E** button. Click here to shut down **chez Otto** without exiting Windows.

Putting Chez Otto to Work

This is the easy part. To activate a function or program, just press the iconic button or click on the radio button. To see additional pages of items, click the page button first

The text box on the right displays either *free memory*, the *current video mode*, or *date/time*. You can toggle the display by right clicking on the window

The memory display lists the free Global memory , %Free of User Segment , and % Free of GDI segment memory. The display is regularly updated 30 seconds or so. It is also recomputed whenever you click a page icon along the bottom of the window.

It is possible to start chez O with an alternate menu file - see the CO.WRI file for details.

Preset Functions



MS DOS Icon

This icon starts up a DOS window. If you wish to specify the command shell program (command.com or 4DOS, for example) or the starting directory, use the right-mouse button to set the 'program' name to whatever shell you wish. The default is command.com.

Run Icon

The 'tennis shoe' icon lets you interactively run programs on an ad-hoc basis. You'll get a file dialog box which you can use to locate the program file. Select the program, click OK, and wait for the program to initialize.

Disk Dive Icon

The Disk icon puts up a dialog box giving the total and free disk space for all hard drives on your system. This can take a couple of seconds, so don't panic.

Help Icon:

Click this icon to launch a Windows help file for Chez O'.

Broken Window Icon

Shut down Windows.

E(xit) Button

Click this small button to exit chez Otto without leaving Windows.

Configuring chez O

CO lets you configure its various aspects by setting the 'properties' of visible items on the screen. In general there are two ways to set these properties:

- * you can click on the item with the right mouse button to activate a properties dialog, or
- * you can drag a file from the file manager window and 'drop' it on the item you wish to set.

Using the Properties Dialog:

Click on the item you wish to set with the right mouse button to activate the properties dialog. What can you set? -- well, just about everything you see in the Chez Otto window will respond to a right mouse button click. Here's what you can configure:

- * 10 program icons along top
- * Program radio buttons (20 for each page)
- * DOS shell icon to specify dos shell program (command.com, 4DOS, or whatever)
- * Background color (try the custom color dialog for fun)
- * Center logo (must be a .BMP file.)
- * Sculpted text display - memory or video mode display
- * Global Options (right click the title bar)
- * Page Text (click a page icon in lower left corner and change "Name" entry)
- * Page Icon (click a page icon in lower left corner and change "File" entry)

See the section on **Program Items** for setting up programs you wish to launch. Heres the details on the other configurable options:

Global Options

You can set these options by right clicking on chez Ottos title bar or choosing **Configure** from the System Menu.

Text Fonts:

Right clicking the CO title bar and choosing 'SetFont' puts up a font selection dialog. Whatever you choose will be used to display the text in CO. I've found that TrueType fonts generally display better than ATM ones if you choose a decorative typeface such as **Architect**.

Autolconize

Select Yes if you wish chez O to get out of the way after launching a program.

Max Page Number

If you find that chez O takes too long to load when it starts up, you can speed up the process by specifying a fewer number of pages. The number you enter here must be from 1 to 5. To have the change take effect, you must close down chez O and start it again.

When you reduce the number of pages, your program items for the missing pages are not deleted - they are just skipped when the program starts up. So, you can regain the items by increasing the number of pages and restarting.

Logo

CO will display a logo of your choice to the left of the program item radio buttons. The maximum visible area is approximately 175 by 175 pixels. If you configure a larger bitmap, it will be clipped on the right and bottom sides to 175 by 175. Since it takes time to load the image when CO starts up, you might want to limit your bitmap to approximately this size to minimize the delay.

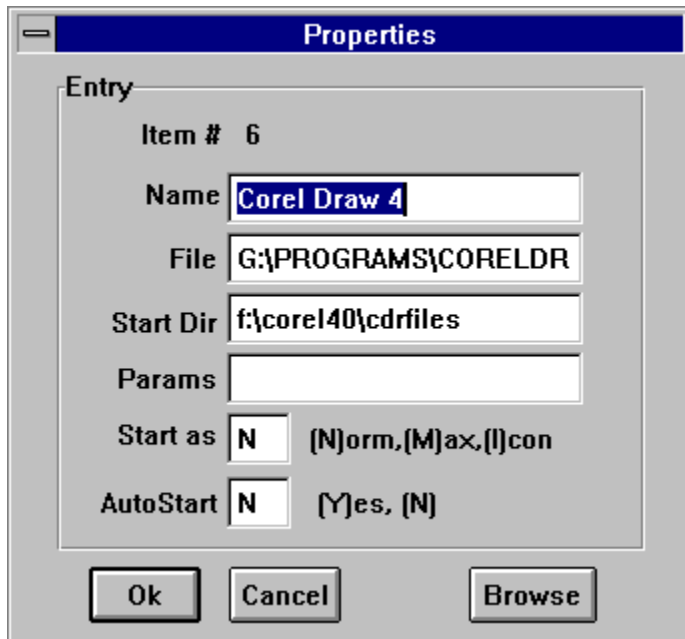
CO can read only Win 3.0 (and 3.1) compatible .BMP files. It supports 2, 16, and 256 color bitmaps. OTTO looks for a default filename of COLOGO.BMP in the startup directory.

Page Text & Icons:

CO supplies 5 default icons to represent the 'pages' of the menu. You can change these icons if desired by setting the properties of the icon. If you right click the icon in question, and set the 'file' option to a .ICO icon file, CO will use that icon. If you set the 'name' field CO will display that text in the sculpted box above the radio buttons. See the discussion above re suitable formats for .ICO files.

Setting up Programs

To set up program items right-click an icon or radio button, and answer the entries in the properties box. You'll see a dialog box with six fields for entry .



The screenshot shows a 'Properties' dialog box with the following fields and options:

- Item #**: 6
- Name**: Corel Draw 4
- File**: G:\PROGRAMS\CORELDR
- Start Dir**: f:\corel40\cdrfiles
- Params**: (empty)
- Start as**: N (N)orm, (M)ax, (I)con
- AutoStart**: N (Y)es, (N)

Buttons at the bottom: Ok, Cancel, Browse.

If an entry already exists for an item, the remaining fields will be filled with the existing data. In the **Name** field, enter the text you want displayed next to the radio button. Brevity is needed - no more than 20 characters. In **File** and **Start Dir** enter respectively the filename of the program and the starting directory. If the .exe file is in the path, you can omit the path, otherwise give the complete pathname in the File box. The **Start Dir** is optional - CO will change to the **Start Dir** just before launching the program if you supply one. In Params enter any parameters you wish to pass to the program such as a filename or command switch. These depend upon the particular application you are using. The **Start As** entry lets you request that the application start normal, maximized, or iconized. Whether this actually happens depends upon the application - it can choose to honor the request or not! **AutoStart** will have CO automatically launch this application as part of its own startup.

Browsing for applications

If you click the Browse Button, a file dialog box opens that lets you navigate the disk and locate the program file you wish to use. After you find it and select it, choose OK, and the full pathname will be entered into the File field (as well as a Name entry based on the filename). You may want to change the Name field, but this is a quick way to find an application without memorizing the pathname.

Path Considerations:

Although OTTO lets you specify a full pathname for the program file and a different starting directory, your application may not support that arrangement. Typically, programs that use link libraries need to be either in the DOS path (before Windows starts) or start in the directory that contains the link libraries. Under Windows 3.1 this requirement is mostly overcome - you may need to experiment however. To accommodate this, change the path or make sure that the Start Dir entry is set to the directory containing the program and link libraries.

Using Drag&Drop:

The icons, radio buttons, and the logo can also be configured using drag and drop. For this magic to work you need to have the Win 3.1 file manager running. To configure an item, find the file in question in File Manager, click and drag the 'filename' from the File Manager window, and drop it on the target item in CO. CO will use the full pathname of the dropped file, construct a program item name from the root name, and store the info in your configuration file. If you 'dropped' on an icon button, the button will redraw to reflect the new program; if you reconfigured a radio button, the text will change to the new program name. If you drop on the logo, the new bitmap image will be drawn.

If you need to set the starting directory, change the program item name, or any other property, use the right-click method to bring up the properties box.

Moving Items:

You can also move items using Drag&Drop. Hold down the shift key and click the item you wish to move - the cursor changes to an up arrow. Move the cursor to the new item (still holding down the shift key), and 'drop' on the new item. The old item will be moved to the new item. You can do this between the 10 iconic buttons and the radio buttons. If you wish to change pages, move the cursor over the page icon you wish to go to, and the page will change.

Item Templates:

You can use a template in place of an actual file name for a program items, and Chez O' will display a selection dialog to let you choose the actual file/document to launch. This option lets you group several items under one menu item. For example, you might have the following:

```
Name:      'Search Utilities'  
File:      '*.exe'  
StartDir:  'c:\util'
```

When you click on 'Search Utilities', Chez O' will put up a file selection dialog displaying all the **.exe** files in the c:\util directory. Select one, and it will be started.

Associations:

You can use a 'document name' in place of a program file if you have established an 'association' for the document type with Windows. This would include all document types registered with the OLE registration database.

For example, if you have registered '.sam' as belonging to Ami Pro, you can use

```
Name:      'Book Chapter 1'  
File:      c:\book\ch1.sam'  
StartDir   'c:\book'
```

to launch Ami Pro with the ch1.sam document.

Iconic Buttons & DOS Programs:

The top row of 10 iconic buttons build their image from the icons stored in the program files. If you configure a button to run a DOS program (.exe,.com, .bat, .pif) Chez Otto will look for an .ICO file with the *same* root name and path, read the icon file, and display the image on the button surface. For example, if you run Paradox from the C:\pdox45\paradox.exe directory, Otto will look for c:\pdox35\paradox.ico when it starts up. On the other hand, if you start Paradox using the PIF file d:\windows\pdox.pif, then CO will look for d:\windows\pdox.ico. Under this scheme you should follow these conventions:

- * Always supply a full path for the 'DOS' program file
- * Use only 16 color 32 by 32 bit icons (the usual)
- * Only one icon per .ICO file

