



The readers write...

Tim Nott reviews and passes on your tips and suggestions for CD track list editing and Registry editing to change default folder icons.

We've received a record amount of feedback and tips by post and email in the past few weeks, so this month's column is largely written by you, the readers.

But first, a quick and easy request from Stephen Hollis, who wanted to know: *"Whether it is possible to stop documents from going into the Documents folder on the Start menu. I sometimes have some very private files that I would rather people didn't see."* The short answer as far as I am aware is that you can't stop them, but there are several ways of removing them.

Open the Recent folder in Windows, and you'll see all the shortcuts that appear in the Documents list — you can delete the ones you don't want to appear. If you have multiple users enabled on a machine then each will have his or her list under Windows/Profiles/Name/Documents. You can also clear the lot by right-clicking on the Taskbar, then selecting Properties/Start Menu/Clear. Note that an independent list is kept in the Registry, at:

HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\RecentDocs

This isn't deleted by either of these actions and although listed in hex, it wouldn't take much detective work to identify the files involved.

Play on...

As you probably know, the Windows CD player will play audio CDs automatically, given the chance. Alternatively, you can launch the CD player manually. In either case, you have the option of selecting tracks and arranging them into a playlist. If you want to be really tedious, you can

even play the same track several times over.

What I only realised recently (and thanks to Paul Sutton for pointing this out) is that you can edit the title and track list. If you pick Edit play list from the Disc menu, you can fill in the artist and title. Click on one of the tracks in the right-hand list and you'll be able to edit the text in the box below it before clicking the Set Name button to add it to the list. (Note that there's a limit on the length of a track name — if you're trying to catalogue Pink Floyd's "Umma Gumma" you're going to run aground halfway through "Several species of small furry animals gathered together in a cave and grooving with a Pict").

The clever bit is that Windows saves this information, along with the serial number of the CD. So when you next stick Mozart or Metallica into the drive, the title, artist and track list appear automatically.

Windows stores all data as plain text in an old fashioned .INI file — CDPLAYER.INI in the main Windows folder. As Paul points

out, it's a good idea to back up this file to floppy, especially if you've typed in the details of a large music collection. And, appropriately enough, Paul wins a record token for his efforts.

Icon time

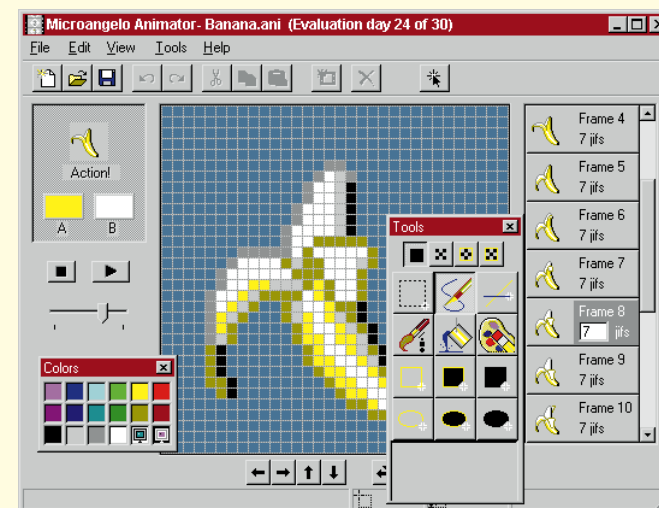
It's time for those irrepressible little fellows again, if you're not all heartily sick of them.

First, many thanks to Mike Peschka, Henry Bevan, Harry Genery, Stephen Taylor, Keith McKay, Jason Ozin, Hoi Lam, Deborah Pate, Stanley Keymer (Finland), Wim Mattaar (Holland) and everyone else who wrote in telling me about the Microangelo icon editor.

Special thanks to Jez Page and Craig Lewin for pointing out that it was on our January issue's cover-mounted CD. Extra special thanks to Gerald McMullen for sending me a whole stack of stuff on floppy disk, including Microangelo version 1 (wake up, Gerald, that's last year's model!), Iconmaster, lots of animated cursors and 13,000 icons, including (nudge, nudge) some X-Rated specimens. Say no more.

For those few readers who didn't write in and haven't heard about Microangelo, the package consists of five modules. The Studio is a straightforward icon editor with tool and colour palettes. It has some nice touches, such as being able to paint in transparent or inverse colour: the first blends in to the colour of the background; the second always contrasts with the background. The Animator lets you create animated cursors using similar tools, frame-by-frame. Each frame can be separately timed by specifying a duration in "jifs" (about 1/60th of a second) — and the cursor "hot-spot" assigned to any part of the image.

The Librarian lets you group individual icons into "libraries" — single files with the .ICL extension. You can also extract icons from .EXE and .DLLs to add to your own library. The great advantage of libraries is the amount of disk space you can save; I've mentioned the cluster factor before, so will just note that 100 icons at 766



Microangelo's Animator for wannabee cursor-Spielbergs

Bolder folders

Many also wrote in answer to the challenge that I offered up on in April's column — how to change the default folder icons. This, as I remarked at the time, doesn't seem to work using

bytes each, stored on a partition greater than 512Mb, will take up 1.6Mb. The same icons in a library take up around 80Kb.

Next, the browser lets you look anywhere for icons and cursors. A nice touch is that the number of icons in a library, .DLL or .EXE, is listed and from here you can open the Librarian or edit individual icons.

Finally, there's the Engineer. This lets you change all the system icons and cursors, including the parts (such as folder icons) that other means can't reach. Microangelo is shareware with registration costing a rather hefty \$59. As it's been updated since its PCW debut, we've included it on this month's CD-ROM. You can also find it at <http://www.impactsoft.com> or the Windows/Files_32 topic on CIX.

Explorer's View/Options/File Types. Craig Lewin, Jason Ozin, Torstein Olsten from Norway and various others all pointed out that you have to edit the Registry. Specifically the entry:

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\explorer\Shell Icons

Jason Ozin correctly points out that you won't have this key unless you've installed the Plus! pack or some other software, such as Microangelo, that adds it for you. But that doesn't stop you adding it yourself. Go down the Regedit tree, as above, until you get to Explorer. Highlight it and choose New Key from the Edit menu, and name in place the key Shell Icons. Highlight this key and choose New String Value. Name this with the number 3. Double click on the 3 and a dialogue box will appear. In the



Drive away

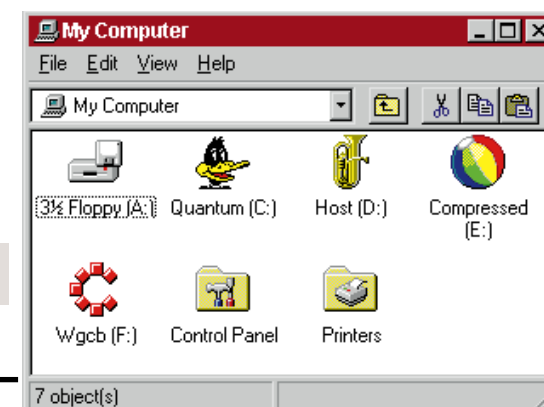
My favourite trick this month comes from Garan Jenkin in Jersey. Once more we're back with icons, but this time there's no registry hacking involved, and this tip makes a rather fine complement to the folder icon trick. You may have noticed that when you stick an Autorun-enabled CD-ROM in the drive, it usually has its own custom drive icon in Explorer or the My Computer folder. You can exploit this capability for other drives by creating a file named AUTORUN.INF in the root of each partition. This file should contain two lines:

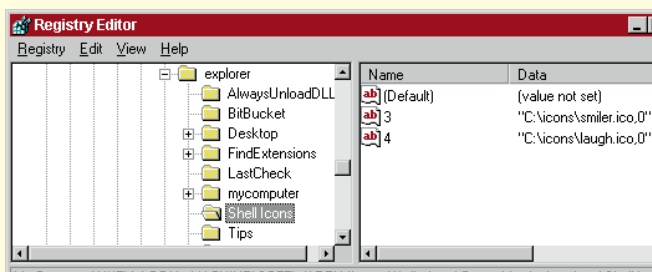
```
[autorun]
icon=filename,number
```

The filename and number conventions are the same as

the registry tip above — if you don't specify a number, the first one in the file (number 0) will be used. You can use a different AUTORUN.INF for each partition to get a different icon. I can't get it to work with floppy disks, but you may have more luck.

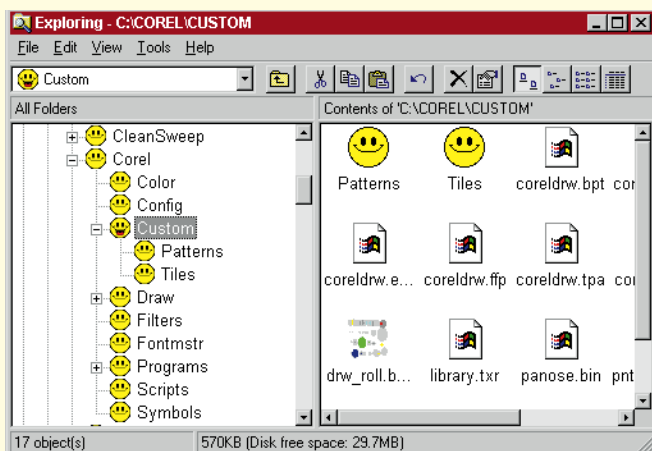
Autorun those drive icons





Left Hitting the metal — editing the folder icons in the registry...

Below, left ...and look — it can be done!



Value Data field type the filename of the icon in the format filename, number, where filename is the complete path to the icon file — which can be an .ICO, .EXE or .DLL. If the file contains more than one icon, then “number” selects the one you want, starting at zero.

For example, if you want the tree icon in SHELL32.DLL this should read:

`C:\windows\system\shell32.dll,41`

This will set the closed folder icon. Repeat with a New String Value named 4 and specify another icon. This will be the open folder icon. Close Regedit, and you'll probably find nothing happens, even if you restart Windows. You need to jump-start the changes, and only Craig Lewin included this information.

While the cat's away...

I've had several reports that Windows starts with the Number Lock off, i.e. the numeric keypad mimics the arrow keys rather than producing numbers, no matter what is set in CONFIG.SYS or the PC BIOS settings.

This, it seems, is a problem with the Intelli-point mouse driver. I haven't been able to reproduce this problem myself, but the following, taken from the MS Knowledge Base, may help. You need to add a key named “Keyboard” to the following registry branch:

`HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Control Panel\Microsoft Input Devices`

Add a string value named “NumLock” to the key, and set the string value to “ON”. As I mentioned, I can't vouch for this personally, but thanks to Alan Budden for passing it on.

was, and click OK. Finally, to get the new Open Folder icon to appear in the title bar of folder windows and on the taskbar, you need to restart Windows.

Your open and closed folder icons should now be permanently changed to the new choice — in theory, at least. I did mine with Microangelo, and Windows changed them back shortly after. I've now redone them by hand, and all seems well. But who can tell what tomorrow may bring?

Robert Parr was less than impressed by my way of getting a directory listing to file using the Send To command and a batch file. He says: “Instead of using the Send To menu as you describe, how about having ‘Contents’ as one of the options when you right click on a folder?” Well, I liked my version because firstly, it didn't involve any Registry editing and secondly, it doesn't add to the top level of the right-mouse menu, which in my case is already rather overcrowded. But I have to admit Robert's method is rather classy, so here it is. As always, make sure you back up the Registry before editing it.

Open the Registry Editor and go to `HKEY_CLASSES_ROOT\Directory\shell`

Add a new key called “contents” into shell, and give it a default value of “&Contents”. Next, add a key called “command” into “contents”, and give it a default value of “c:\windows\contents.bat %1”. Then close Regedit and use Notepad to create the following batch file:

```
@echo off
dir %1 /o > c:\windows\contents.txt
notepad c:\windows\contents.txt
```

Go to Control Panel Display (or right-click Properties on the Desktop) and pick the Appearance tab. Scroll through the list of items until you see Icon. Change the icon size, click on Apply and you should see the changes take effect. You can then change the icon size back to whatever it

Save this in the Windows folder as “contents.bat”. Right-clicking on a folder and selecting Contents will now open Notepad and display an alphabetically sorted list of files contained in that folder which can be printed, or preserved by saving under a new name.

If you don't want to edit the Registry, you can do this via the File Types tab of Explorer/View/Options. Scroll down to File Folder, click on Edit, then click New in the next dialogue box. In the following box type “Contents” under Action and “c:\windows\contents.bat %1” under Application Used.

What's in a name?

To return to another long-running saga, Deborah Pate wrote concerning my moan about applications that put their name, rather than the filename, first in the title bar or task bar button: “Microsoft now recommends that programs should put the filename first in the title bar, and Windows 95 programs like Notepad are well-behaved. I presume Office 95 programs are, too. Unfortunately earlier versions aren't...” Well, that was my original point — Office 95 programs don't put the filename first, but this shouldn't prove an insurmountable problem for Deborah, who describes the following wonderful piece of hackery.

“It is possible to fix this with the aid of a hex editor. Once you've found the place in the program where the title bar legend is kept, you can simply replace the first character with a null. This means the program name doesn't show in the title bar or taskbar. The difficult (well, tedious) bit is finding the right place in the right file, but here are the ones I've managed to track down:

- Word 6.0: the second occurrence of 'Microsoft Word' in the file WWINTL.DLL.
- Excel 5.0: the seventh occurrence of 'Microsoft Excel' in EXCEL.EXE.
- Corel Draw 5.0: the second occurrence of 'CorelDRAW!' in CORELDRW.EXE.”

Far be it from me to encourage such wanton vandalism, which probably breaks the terms of your licence agreement and makes ineradicable stains on your best anorak, but it would be shirking my duty not to investigate this. And besides, it sounded fun. So having backed up everything in sight and checked my life assurance, I tried this with Word 6.0 and Excel 5.0 and it worked a treat. A book token is on its way, Deborah.

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