

Midi Machine Technical Documents

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FILENAME: EPMM0001: Midi Machine Revision Notes

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This document was last updated on 7/4/97.

V3.1 Midi Machine V3.1 Official Release

With newly released MCI drivers, Midi Machine V3.1 now supports the following filetypes - *.AIF, *.AU, *.MOV, *.MPG, *.MP2, *.RMI, and *.SND.

Placed the "Tip of the Day" in a new window. You can now scroll through the tips in forward or reverse order.

Redid the "Welcome Screen" with options to visit the Midi Machine web sites, read technical help, play songs directly from the welcome screen, and more.

Added a link to the Midi Machine home page from the main form. If you have a web browser installed, one click from the main form should take you straight to the Midi Machine home page.

Added the following new options to the "Help" menu: "What's New?" and "View Welcome Screen."

Moved the "Playmode" popup button to the left of the playmodes panel and removed the text.

Added a new "View" menu to the main window. Moved the following from the setup-display page to the "View" menu. These view options can now be toggled simply by selecting the appropriate menu item under "View."

- Song Information
- Queue Moving Hands
- Animated Icon
- F1 on Status Bar
- Help on Status Bar

Added a new "Popups Buttons" option under View. This toggles viewing the popups buttons (default to off). Some people reported that these buttons cluttered the display while others liked to use them. Now

you have a choice.

Turning the "queue display moving hands" off now increases the width of the queue display.

The queue position moving hands option under "View" is now set default to off. Many people stated that this cluttered the display while a few people like the hands. Now you have a choice to use them or not.

Added a "Filetypes" option under View. This now takes the place of the filters window on the main form, allowing you to select filetypes from a dialog box.

Removed the filters panel from the main form (function is now under View menu) as well as the Filters popup button.

Redesigned the "Playmode" panel to increase the amount of items in the multimedia queue that are visible onscreen.

Misc. Cosmetic changes.

V3.00b adds the order information whereby you can order Midi Machine via the web.

V3.00 Midi Machine V3.0 Official Release

Added setup option: Use Midi Machine Colors instead of Win default?

 Toggles using Win95 colors instead of the normal Midi Machine colors. Defaults to OFF.

Modified "Tip of the Day" items for clarity.

The "Maximize" button was removed from the tips window - it never was not needed.

Shareware users are now notified of the 30-item limit when reached.

A bug was fixed whereby after displaying a rich-text-file (.RTF), standard plain-text (.TXT) files would keep the same font and alignment formatting as the .RTF file previously displayed.

Added a horizontal scrollbar to the file listbox for easier viewing of long filenames.

Modified colors/fonts of 'Tip of the Day'/'Technical Help' window.

Added the "Repeat Current" playmode which continuously repeats the current item until the checkmark is removed.

Help file was modified to reflect updates.

Updated installer - misc. changes and added readme and program execution at installer end.

Uninstallation should be cleaner if needed.

V3.00b Midi Machine V3.00 Beta Release II

Added setup option: Show the F1 Help Text on the StatusBar?

 Toggles showing the {Press F1 for Help} text on the statusbar

Added setup option: Show the Help Text on the StatusBar?

Toggles showing the help text on the statusbar. Help text is context-sensitive.

Redid the Display page of the Setup form from comboboxes to checkboxes.

This display change was needed for cosmetic reasons and so to make room for more setup options.

Modified the help to show these new setup options.

Changed the Setup form icon to the main Midi Machine 3.0 icon.

Shows the current track number when renaming cd tracks.

Minor cosmetic/bug fixes.

V3.00B Complete Rewrite of Code. Too many revisions to list here.

V2.01 Interim Version for Registered Users

Allows disabling of all CD-audio routines via .INI edit including CD-ROM detection.

V2.01 Midi Machine V2.01 Official Release - Bug Fixes/More

Re-designed the main window to allow the viewing of long pathnames in the multimedia queue.

Removed some of the "flicker" at start-up.

Fixed bug where the directory would not change to play files at the command-line.

Added the TextWindow textSize option to the MWD (Midi Machine Window-Definition) files.

Fixed bug where some users got file not found errors in the setup process.

V2.00' Midi Machine V2.00' Limited Release

Fixed bug in the RUN FIRST album/info file regarding the FILE NOT FOUND errors.

V2.00 Midi Machine V2.00 Official Release

Re-did main window, removing graphical buttons and placing options in the menu bar to reduce "clutter" - open/save album, header midi, setup.

Streamlined icon animation loading, allowed more icons to be loaded in the registered version.

Re-did setup routines to allow setup for Environment, CD Audio, Display, and Animated Icons.

Removed the status bar; its features were duplicated in the window title bar.

Add description auto-load, loads xxx.txt, where xxx is multimedia file name.

Added digital/analog display of sound playing time, current position.

Fully integrated CD player, tracks are loaded into the queue and playable like any other multimedia files.

Added CD eject button.

Added support to load color maps, created several.

Removed diagonal-line background to remove the little flicker which remained.
Created Events "drive" for performing multimedia events; created 13 events for demonstrations and viewing pictures.
Can display .TXT files in a new window.
Can display .BMP, .WMF, .ICO files in a new window.
Protected users from performing invalid operations on CD/Events drive.
Added up/down arrows for moving items around queue.
Mentions in status bar when loading CD information to Midi Machine.
Completely new help engine.
Displays CD name in description area automatically.
Automatically saves queue to a text file when the program exits; re-loads it at start-up.
Displays ALL icon animation information in the SETUP area.
Modified "About" box some.
Handles right-click mouse help for object information.
Can show a help tip every time program is loaded.
Created SETUP options: load color map, display digital time, display analog time, auto-show help tip, auto-ask for a new CD name if Midi Machine doesn't know it, auto-seek CD track information, auto-play, auto-play CDs when loaded into the drive.
Created tile graphics for graphics, text, and button windows.
Plenty of bug fixes, and so much more that we can't possibly list every single improvement!

V1.21 International/SWREG Ordering Information (same code as V1.20).

Documentation contains Compuserve(c) SWREG information.
Documentation includes international ordering information.

{{{ OLDER VERSION REVISIONS DELETED FOR BREVITY }}}}

FILENAME: EPMM0002: List of Midi Machine Animated Icons

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This document was last updated on 8/13/95.

{{{ DOES NOT RELATE TO MIDI MACHINE V3.XX }}}}

FILENAME: EPMM0003: Midi Machine V2.00-bug in "Run Me First!"

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This document was last updated on 2/6/1997.

{{{ DOES NOT RELATE TO MIDI MACHINE V3.XX }}}}

FILENAME: EPMM0004: Midi Machine V2.00-setup bug-"CTL3D.DLL"

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This document was last updated on 2/6/1997.

{{{ DOES NOT RELATE TO MIDI MACHINE V3.XX }}}}

FILENAME: EPMM0005: Midi Machine No Sound on PC Speaker

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This document was last updated on 6/16/97.

As mentioned by previous users of Midi Machine, this application, like most other Win3.1+ multimedia apps, fails to attempt to use the PC Speaker driver when playing .WAV files.

BACKGROUND:

Win3.1+ users who do not have a sound card have the option of loading a PC Speaker driver which allows Win3.1+ to play system event sounds on the PC Speaker. The driver will only play .WAV files, and does an average job of playing the sounds correctly.

Many programs fail to use the speaker driver when playing .WAV files due to the fact that the MCI (Media Control Interface) drivers do not work for the speaker driver.

NO FIX:

With the proliferation of sound cards available, there is no planned fix for Midi Machine to attempt to use the speaker driver if no sound cards are available. Midi Machine works fine with most sound cards "out of the box," and will work with other sound cards with minor configuration (see document EPMM0009).

FILENAME: EPMM0006: Midi Machine V2.xx-Animated Icons

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This document was last updated on 9/30/95.

{{{ DOES NOT RELATE TO MIDI MACHINE V3.XX }}}}

FILENAME: EPMM0007: Midi Machine V2.xx-ALT-S stops queue

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This document was last updated on 9/30/95.

{{{ DOES NOT RELATE TO MIDI MACHINE V3.XX }}}}

FILENAME: EPMM0008: Midi Machine V2.xx-!/ No Tips

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This document was last updated on 9/30/95.

{{{ DOES NOT RELATE TO MIDI MACHINE V3.XX }}}}

FILENAME: EPMM0009: Midi Machine No Sound

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This document was last updated on 1/24/1997.

As mentioned by several users, cases exist where Midi Machine may not automatically play midi and sound files the first time it is run. This scenario may not actually be the fault of Midi Machine, but several methods are available to solve this problem.

BACKGROUND:

With the proliferation of the "multimedia computer," many manufacturers automatically installed sound boards and cd-rom drivers, complete with a set of drivers so that the operating system knows how to communicate with the equipment. These essential drivers vary between pieces of equipment, and therefore programs had to be made to accomodate the drivers.

With Windows 3.1 and above, these device-dependent drivers could still be used, but a new standard called MCI [Media Control Interface] could also be used, allowing programs to communicate with all different types of sound boards quickly and efficiently.

There are many cases, however, where these drivers have not been installed on pre-packaged systems. While a growing amount of software requires the MCI drivers, a fair amount of software still rely on these device-dependent drivers, and thus a sound "problem" might not be noticeable until a piece of software that requires MCI drivers fails to run. Midi Machine is one such program that requires MCI drivers to ensure compatibility.

POSSIBLE FIX/WIN3.1-WFWG3.11:

To test your system for the presence of MCI drivers, run MEDIA PLAYER and try playing a sound or midi file. If they play under Media Player and Midi Machine fails to play the sounds, contact Excel Progs for further help. If Media Player also fails to play the midi music, then you will need to install the proper MCI drivers.

In order to install the MCI drivers under Windows 3.1, go to the Control Panel and select drivers. If [MCI Sound] and [MCI Sequencer] or other drivers similar in name are not found, then go to ADD and install the MCI devices that are not present.

An alternate approach to installation:

BACK UP your SYSTEM.INI file to SYSTEM.BAK or SYSTEM.BK2 (you may already have backup files so just use SYSTEM.BKx).

In the [mcj] section, add this line:

Sequencer=MCISEQ.DRV

POSSIBLE FIX2/WIN3.1-WFWG3.11:

Choose your Control Panel and double-click on Midi Mapper. Click on "New" to create a new MidiMap, and pick a name of your choosing.

A grid should appear with "Port Name" on the center column. Click on the "[None]" pulldown in line 1 and select "MVI OPL3 FM Synthesizer" or "Voyetra Super Sapi FM Driver" or equivalent. Do the same for lines 2-10 and 13-16.

Click on line 16 under "Dest Channel" and change the 16 to 10.

Click OK until the Midi Mapper is closed and save all of your changes.

DEPENDING on your sound card you may have to adjust these instructions slightly. Please see your sound card manufacturer for more details on creating a Midi Mapper. Although this SHOULD already be set up for you, many times it isn't and you have to go through these instructions.

POSSIBLE FIX/WIN95+:

Test for the presence of Midi as above using Media Player. If the MCI midi driver is not present, you need to go to the Add New Hardware Wizard and not have Windows check for new hardware types. Choose the "Sound, video, and game controllers" category and click on "Microsoft MCI" as the Manufacturer. Click on "MIDI Sequencer Device (Media Control)" under the Models and finish the installation. If digital audio sounds do not play, go back to the wizard and select "Wave Audio Device (Media Control)" for installation.

FILENAME: EPMM0010: Midi Machine Mysterious Errors

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This document was last updated on 1/24/1997.

{{{ DOES NOT RELATE TO MIDI MACHINE V3.XX }}}}

FILENAME: EPMM0011: Midi Machine Skipping Sounds

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This document was last updated on 6/16/1997.

As noted by our beta-testers, Midi Machine has sometimes skipped or gotten "stuck" on certain sound files. Upon closer examination, it was found that these sound files were all corrupt in some fashion, and some other sounds which had other applications stuck were played fine with Midi Machine.

Midi Machine will skip sound files that it has no way of playing; likewise, it will try to skip to the next sound file in a queue if the sound currently being played is corrupt and has seemed to "end" to the listener.

BACKGROUND:

Sound files are digital representations of audio information. They are files, just like texts, programs, and graphics are files. Like other types of files, they can sometimes be corrupted or arrive to a computer system in a corrupt format.

SOLVE THE PROBLEM:

METHOD 1: Upgrade Midi Machine to version 2.01

Each version of Midi Machine has worked further on algorithms to try to play and recognize the endings of more sound files. While Midi Machine V2.01 will not be able to play totally corrupt sound files, it will attempt to play certain corrupt files and recognize the ending of such files, even when an EOF marker is not returned to Midi Machine.

In order to upgrade, you need to download Midi Machine 2.01 from one of the distribution sites. Run the SETUP program, and when asked, traverse your drives and click on the MM200.INI file when found. After entering the source drive and path for the upgrade files, your copy of Midi Machine 2.00 will be upgraded to version 2.01, which improves on the algorithms for detecting endings of corrupt sounds.

METHOD 2: Re-retrieve the corrupt sound files

Many problems can cause sounds to be transferred to your system incorrectly, including, but not limited to:

- 1) The sound uploader (sender) did not transmit the sound correctly.
- 2) A network error.
- 3) Failing to go to BINARY mode when retrieving a sound from an FTP server.
- 4) Using a UUDECODE program that does not check for errors.
- 5) A .WAV sound file that is actually in a different format. Just like you can save a text file without the .TXT extension, people can save .WAV files with other names, and the same goes with sounds of other formats.

Naturally, if a sound file is 0 bytes, it is not completed, but it is difficult to test for other corrupt sound files without playing them. If a sound file can not be played, it is best to test the file with several programs (including MEDIA PLAYER). If it can not be played with ANY sound program, then it is a good guess to say the sound file is corrupt and should be re-transmitted if possible.

METHOD 3: Hit the Next Button

As a last resort, if a sound file is stuck and Midi Machine can not recognize that the sound has ended,

hitting the "Next" button should move you to the next sound file in the queue. If this is required, note the sound filename for further processing, testing, and/or possible deletion.

METHOD 4: Upgrade Midi Machine to version 3.xx

Midi Machine V3.xx is a complete rewrite of Midi Machine. With a powerful and easy-to-use interface, Midi Machine 3.xx is the definite multimedia manager for serious enthusiasts. Download Midi Machine 3.xx from one of the distribution sites.

FILENAME: EPMM0012: Midi Machine V2,3.xx-garbled CD Audio

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This document was last updated on 1/24/1997.

As noted by our staff, when playing certain CDs with Midi Machine V2,3.xx on certain CD drives, the sound seems to jumble and/or "skip" like an old scratched 45 record.

BACKGROUND:

Certain audio CD/CD drive combinations have caused sound jumbling and/or jumping due to the differing amounts of sound stored on a CD.

SOLVE THE PROBLEM:

METHOD 1: Try the CD in a standard audio CD-player (not CD-ROM)

With improper care (and sometimes just due to wear), audio-CDs can become corrupted. It is vital to treat CDs with care; hold them by the sides and take care never to touch the data (bottom) side when placing the CD in a drive or taking it out. Cleaning CDs should only be done by CD-cleaning kits following the instructions strictly. Although Excel Progs can not be held responsible for CDs going bad due to following these methods, they have been proven to increase the CD life. If the CD works outside of the computer, then follow the next step.

METHOD 2: Play the CD in the computer CD-drive outside of a CD-player.

Most (if not all) CD-Rom drives have a button on the front to allow playing a CD outside of the computer's control. Test the CD using this method, and if it fails to work, then test other CDs that are known to work with the drive. If they work, then the CD in question and the drive are not compatible with each other. If no CDs work, then you need to check the CD connections (do not do this yourself if you do not know how--again, Excel Progs can not be responsible for damage done to your system!) Make sure your case is level (although certain CD players CAN work on a slight angle--check your manual). If these options fail, check data CD-ROMs. If even they fail to work, you may need to call in a repairman and/or replace your drive. Every situation is unique so we can not know exactly the cause and solution of your particular problem.

METHOD 3: The CD works outside of the CD player.

Make sure you have the latest CD-Rom drivers from the manufacturer, and that they are installed correctly. If you are using Win3.1, make sure the "[MCI] CD Audio" driver is installed correctly. Although this has yet to be a problem, turn OFF the animated prompts and all digital/analog time displays to free CPU time.

FILENAME: EPMM0013: Midi Machine V2.xx-Locks in Win95

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This document was last updated on 9/30/95.

{{{ DOES NOT RELATE TO MIDI MACHINE V3.XX }}}}

FILENAME: EPMM0014: Midi Machine V2.xx-Right-click problems

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This document was last updated on 9/30/95.

{{{ DOES NOT RELATE TO MIDI MACHINE V3.XX }}}}

FILENAME: EPMM0015: Midi Machine V2.xx-.TXT pullup

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This document was last updated on 9/30/95.

{{{ DOES NOT RELATE TO MIDI MACHINE V3.XX }}}}

FILENAME: EPMM0016: Midi Machine V3.xx-Drag&Drop Not Working

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This document was last updated on 1/25/1997.

Some people have noted that Midi Machine V3.xx does not support file drag&drop from File Manager/Explorer as mentioned in the documentation. This is probably because the configuration option got changed and needs to be reset.

Method:

Choose "Setup Options" from the "Tools Menu." Click on the "General" tab and choose "Yes" when asked about supporting drag&drop. Click "OK" to save your changes.

FILENAME: EPMM0017: Midi Machine V3.xx-CD Track Renaming

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This document was last updated on 1/25/1997.

With Midi Machine V3.xx, to edit the cd name/author/track and misc. info, one can merely click on the fields and enter in the desired new information. This does not work with the CD track names, as clicking on the items merely highlights the tracks.

Method:

In order to rename CD tracks, click on the tracks to rename and choose the "Rename" function just as you would rename multimedia files. Due to the multimedia file/cd track integration built into Midi Machine, it will know the difference between tracks and files and will remember the renamed tracks when you next insert the cd.

FILENAME: EPMM0018: Midi Machine V3.xx-CD Program Incompatibility

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This document was last updated on 1/25/1997.

When running other CD-audio programs at the same time as Midi Machine, Midi Machine may report MMSYSTEM or other errors when trying to read the CD information or when trying to play CD audio drives. It may also report this error at start-up.

Method:

Disable any other CD-audio playing programs such as FlexiCD and the CDPlayer that comes with Win95 before and while running Midi Machine.

FILENAME: EPMM0019: Midi Machine V3.xx-Incompatible CD Info Files

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This document was last updated on 2/28/1997.

Midi Machine creates and uses a file on your hard drive called CDDAT.DAT in the Midi Machine directory (folder). This file is used to store the audio- CD related information that Midi Machine remembers when you next insert a particular CD, including its name, author name, category, misc. information about the CD, and the CD tracknames, as well as a special ID generated by Midi Machine which is used to later track the re-insertion of said CD.

Problem:

Midi Machine 3.x 16-bit and 32-bit versions use a slightly different format (or set of rules) when using the file CDDAT.DAT. Because of the format (rule) differences, this file can not be shared between the two versions of Midi Machine V3.xx. In other words, Midi Machine 3.x for Win3.x (16 bit) does not remember CD information stored by Midi Machine 3.x for Win95 (32 bit) and vice-versa.

Solution:

There is no true solution at this time, although Excel Progs is working on a converter between the two versions of Midi Machine. In the meantime, it is recommended to install Midi Machine 3.x-16 bit and Midi Machine 3.x-32 bit in different directories (folders) if you need both copies on a particular system.