



# WorkStrip X

## User Guide

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### Introduction

WorkStrip X is an intelligent, system wide productivity enhancement tool for professional and intensive Mac users. Situated on the desktop, WorkStrip is an advanced alternative to the Dock, providing a host of intuitive features:

- Multiple “Workspaces” to organize your work
- Instant file previews without loading an application
- Advanced tracking of applications, documents & web sites
- Instant panel views of recent files, folders and bookmarks

### Getting Started

#### System Requirements

Any Macintosh running Mac OS X version 10.1 or newer can run WorkStrip X.

#### Install

To install WorkStrip, simply drag the WorkStrip X application to your Applications folder; go there and launch it.

#### License Validation

If you have already purchased a WorkStrip X license, you need to enter your confirmation details into WorkStrip X. Click on the tab behind the Quick Access icon to open its panel, then click the ‘License Validation’ tab. Enter your activation key and confirmation ID, then click the ‘Validate Now’ button. If you need to purchase a WorkStrip X license, visit [www.softchaos.com](http://www.softchaos.com).

If you have previously purchased WorkStrip for Mac OS 9 (before 24<sup>th</sup> June 2002) you may qualify for a free upgrade as an 'early adopter' — visit [www.softchaos.com](http://www.softchaos.com) to upgrade your license. If you bought WorkStrip from a store or expo, you must first register your purchase with Softchaos before your upgrade can be processed. Upgrade details can be found at [www.softchaos.com](http://www.softchaos.com).

## Overview

### The Strip

The items on the strip are represented by icons and tabs, and have two means of accessing them, a menu and a panel window. The menu gives you rapid access to many features associated with the item, while the panel window gives you a more detailed and powerful way of working with the item. Click and hold on an icon to see its menu, or click on the tab under it to open its panel window.

1. An icon
2. A tab  
*Each item on WorkStrip has an icon and a tab*
3. Quick Access  
*Direct access to preferences, help, desktop, and more*
4. Current Workspace  
*Organize your Workspaces and bookmarks*
5. Finder
6. A folder
7. A file
8. Applications
9. Workstrip Trash
10. A pop-up menu  
*Fast access to features on this item*
11. A panel window  
*Detailed access to features on this item*



### Setup Assistant



To make your transition to WorkStrip as easy as possible, after launching it for the first time, a setup assistant will appear to help familiarize you with what WorkStrip can do, and allow you to decide which general features you wish to start out with. When you reach the end of the Setup Assistant panel and click Finish, it will go away. If you wish to access it again, you can restart it from the Quick Access panel.



Quick Access icon



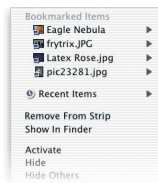
Default Workspace icon



Application icons



Folder & File icons



Bookmarks in a pop-up menu



Dragging an item by its tab

### Quick Access Item

With the Quick Access menu you can directly access files on your desktop and in your home folder; applications you've recently used, all documents recently opened through WorkStrip, and configure WorkStrip's preferences. Any application, file, folder, or volume dragged to the Quick Access icon will be made available on the strip at all times.

### Workspaces

WorkStrip introduces the concept of Workspaces. Each Workspace, when made active, defines which applications, folders, and files are available on the strip and provides a virtual 'folder' which automatically remembers all of the documents that you access through WorkStrip, the web sites that you visit with Internet Explorer, and any documents and web sites that you bookmark. You begin with one Workspace entitled "My Workspace", but you can have as many Workspaces as you like, with each Workspace representing a project, a client, or just different aspects of the work that you do on your computer. Any application, file, folder, or volume dragged to the current Workspace icon will be made available on the strip whenever that Workspace is active.

### Applications

When you launch applications, they will automatically appear in WorkStrip, giving you the ability to switch between them by clicking on their icons. From each application item you can also access any documents you recently opened in that application via WorkStrip, you can bookmark files that you need constant access to, and see instant previews of recent and bookmarked files without launching an application.

### Folders, Files & Volumes

As with the Dock, you can have files, folders and disk volumes accessible right on the strip. WorkStrip's more powerful menus give you access to the files in your folders and volumes sorted by type and with instant previews, and you can quickly scroll through and use the contents of a folder or volume in WorkStrip's panel windows without the need of using Finder.

### Recent Items & Bookmarks

WorkStrip automatically tracks the last 100 documents opened via the strip and the last 50 web sites visited with Internet Explorer, giving you access to these items in an intelligent fashion throughout the strip's menus and panel windows.

### Reordering Items on the Strip

To change the position of an item on the strip, click the tab behind the item's icon and drag the tab along the strip to the position you would like. Some items, including Quick Access, Workspace and Finder, cannot be moved.

### Removing Items from the Strip

To remove an item from the strip, use the item's menu and select the 'Remove From Strip' option. Files, folders and non-running applications will be removed immediately. Any running application will be removed when you quit that application.

Items can also be removed by dragging the item's tab away from the edge of the screen. Some items, including Quick Access, Workspace, and Finder, cannot be removed.



### *Help & Support*

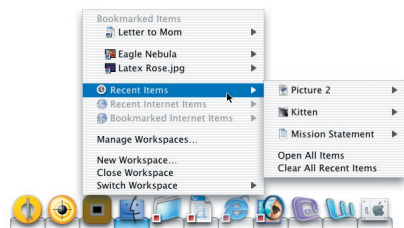
For further information about WorkStrip X, please refer to the appropriate area in the Reference section below. For information on support see the "Customer Support" section in this manual.

After having familiarized yourself with WorkStrip's capabilities, don't be afraid to jump right in and try them out! To learn all of the possibilities and 'power' features, consult the appropriate area in the Reference section.

## Reference

### User Interface

As WorkStrip is an interface enhancement available regardless of which application you are currently using, it has none of the standard user interface elements you would normally associate with an application, such as a menu bar or document windows. Each item on the strip is represented by an icon with a tab below it. As with Mac OS X's Dock, you can click on an application icon in WorkStrip to switch to that application, or if it is not running, it will be launched. For applications, tabs are colored based on their status: running applications appear with normal tabs, applications not currently running appear with transparent tabs, and the current 'foreground' application has a blue tab. To access WorkStrip's unique features, you use its pop-up menus and panel windows.



A pop-up menu in WorkStrip X

### WorkStrip Menus

Menus are accessed by either holding down the control key when clicking on a WorkStrip icon, or clicking and holding down the mouse button until it appears. If an item's panel window is open, you can still access its pop-up menu by holding down the control key when clicking on the icon protruding from the panel window. There are 6 different types of menus you will see depending upon the type of item you access the menu from:



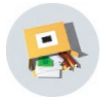
Quick Access icon:

- Access the contents of your desktop and home folder
- Ability to quickly launch any application you have used recently — plus any others in your Applications folder
- Access the last 100 documents you have opened via WorkStrip regardless of which Workspace was active at the time
- Open WorkStrip's Preferences window
- Shortcut to toggle WorkStrip's hiding behavior
- Shortcut to toggle WorkStrip's internet tracking feature
- Open WorkStrip's on-line documentation (this document)
- Quit WorkStrip X



Current Workspace icon:

- Access all bookmarks in this Workspace, regardless of parent application
- Access the last 100 documents you have opened via WorkStrip while this Workspace has been active
- Access the last 50 web sites you have visited while this Workspace has been active
- Access all web site bookmarks in this Workspace
- Open the Manage Workspaces window
- Create a new Workspace
- Close the current Workspace
- Switch Workspaces, closing the current Workspace and making the selected Workspace active



Finder icon:

- Access recent folders you have opened via WorkStrip while the current Workspace has been active
- Activate Finder, making it visible and bringing all of its windows to the front
- Hide all Finder windows
- Hide all windows other than Finder's
- Quit all applications



Application icon:

- Access all bookmarks in this Workspace assigned to this application
- Access recent documents opened in this application via WorkStrip, from among the last 100 documents of all types you have opened while this Workspace has been active
- If the application would normally disappear from the strip when you quit it, two "Keep In Strip" options appear here:
  - "Keep In Strip: Always" will keep this application icon available at all times
  - "Keep In Strip: When (Workspace name) is active" will keep the application in the strip only when the currently active Workspace is active
- If the application had previously been kept on the strip by either dragging it to the Quick Access or Workspace icon, or one of the above Keep In Strip menu commands was used, "Remove From Strip" appears here
- Show In Finder opens the Finder window containing the application
- Activate the application, making it visible and bringing its windows to the front
- Hide the application and all of its windows
- Hide all windows other than this application's own windows
- Quit the application



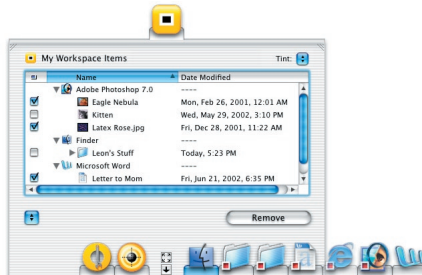
File icon:

- Preview the file
- Keep In Strip/Remove From Strip – see *application icon above*
- Open the file as if you had double-clicked it in Finder
- Show in Finder opens the folder containing this file in Finder



Folder or Volume icon:

- The entire contents of the folder or volume, sorted by type
- Keep In Strip/Remove From Strip – see *application icon above*
- Open the folder or volume as if you had double-clicked it in Finder
- Show in Finder opens a window containing this folder/volume in Finder
- If a volume, the ability to eject the volume without having to switch back to the Finder



The current Workspace's panel window

## WorkStrip Panel Windows

Panel windows are opened by clicking on the tab next to an icon on the strip. Closing a panel window can be achieved by clicking on the icon or tab, or clicking the arrow button at the position in the strip where the icon was originally visible. Some panel windows are resizable, and have resizing “grips” visible on two of their corners. These windows also may be automatically “zoomed” to a size appropriate for the panel window's contents by clicking on the zoom button next to the arrow button.

The panel windows for folders and volume items contain a list of the files the item contains, similar to Finder's List view. Panel windows for applications contain a similar list, but all items in the list are items you have recently opened in that application via WorkStrip, in addition to any items you have bookmarked for that application. Your Workspace panel window contains the contents of all of your application's panel windows, sorted out by application. These lists include checkboxes to the left of each item, indicating if an item is a bookmark. Recent items can be changed to bookmarks and vice versa by simply clicking the checkbox.

A tint pop-up menu button appears in the panel windows of all items you have kept on the strip, which can be used to change the appearance of the item as it appears on the strip — useful for discriminating between files or folders with otherwise identical icons.

A pop-up menu button can be found below WorkStrip's panel window lists to access a variety of commands. Control-clicking on item(s) in the list will give you the same menu as this pop-up menu button. Some of these commands are available only in appropriate circumstances, e.g. Preview is only available when a single file is selected. Pop-up menu commands include:

- Open the item(s) as if they had been double-clicked in Finder
- Show in Finder reveals the item(s) icons in Finder
- Contents of the folder
- Preview the file
- Path of the item's location on your hard disk
- Hide or Show Recent Items
- Rename the item
- Create a new folder within a folder
- Move selected items to Trash
- Select All items in the list
- Select None of the items in the list
- Close All application and folder entries in the list, collapsing their triangles

Workspace and Application panels also include a Remove button which is active if any items are selected. This command does not delete any actual files or folders, but simply removes them from WorkStrip's tracking until the next time you access the real item via WorkStrip.

Like WorkStrip's menus, there are 6 different types of panel windows you will see depending upon the type of item the panel window is opened from:

*Quick Access panel window:*

- About WorkStrip
- After purchasing WorkStrip, here you may enter your license information to fully enable the product
- Restart the Setup Assistant
- Open WorkStrip's Preferences window
- Open WorkStrip's on-line documentation
- Quit WorkStrip X

*Current Workspace panel window:*

- An item list of all applications for which you have bookmarked an item or have opened a document recently via WorkStrip. Each application lists its own bookmarks and recent items under it

*Finder panel window:*

- An item list of all folders you have either bookmarked or have opened recently via WorkStrip while this Workspace has been active

*An application panel window:*

- An item list of all documents and folders you have bookmarked for this application while in this Workspace, plus any other documents you recently opened via WorkStrip while in this Workspace

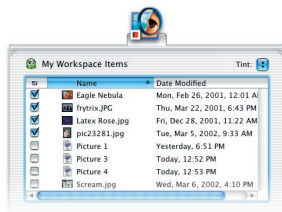
*A file panel window:*

- The file's icon, full name, size, creation date, and modification date
- Open the file as if it had been double-clicked in Finder
- Show in Finder reveals the file icon in Finder

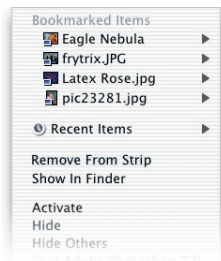
*A folder or volume panel window:*

- An item list of every file within the folder or volume. Note that these items are not displayed as recently opened items nor as bookmarks, and as such do not have checkboxes
- Show in Finder reveals all selected file/folder icons in Finder





Bookmarks appear in panel windows as items with ticked checkboxes



Bookmarks appear at the top of pop-up menus

## Bookmarks

Bookmarks in WorkStrip are similar to those in a web browser; and can be compared to aliases in Finder; they are pointers or 'shortcuts' to files, folders or web sites. Bookmarked items appear only in menus and panel window item lists — do not confuse them with items you want visible right on the strip (see *Adding items to the strip*). Each file or folder bookmark is associated with a specific application, whereas web site bookmarks are associated with all web browsers. When you create a bookmark in WorkStrip, it becomes available in four places on the strip:

- At the top of the parent application icon's pop-up menu
- In the parent application's panel window
- At the top of the current Workspace icon's pop-up menu
- In the current Workspace's panel window

Bookmarks appear in panel windows as items with their checkboxes ticked. Recently accessed documents appear with unticked checkboxes. Use your current Workspace icon's pop-up menu or panel window to access all bookmarks regardless of which applications the individual bookmarks are associated with. When accessing your bookmarks through a specific application's pop-up menu or panel window, you will only see the bookmarks you have associated with that particular application.

*Create a bookmark:* Simply drag any number of folders or files from Finder into the item list in an application's open panel window. If the panel window is not open, hover over the application's tab on WorkStrip for a moment, with the dragged item(s), and the panel will open. You can also drag items into your Workspace panel window, but this may not always get you what you want; because you are not specifying an application, the bookmark will be automatically associated with the application in which the document was created. For example, you might bookmark an image associated with Mac OS X's Preview application, however you will always want to access the image from Adobe Photoshop.

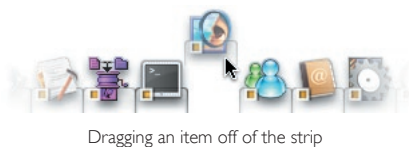
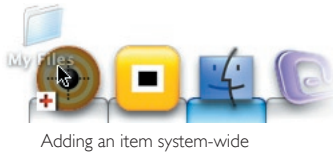
*Making a recently accessed document into a bookmark:* Open the panel window for the application in which you used the document. If you recently opened a document via WorkStrip, it will appear here with an empty checkbox. Tick the checkbox to turn the item into a bookmark.

*Removing a bookmark:* Open the panel window for the application with which the bookmark is associated and un-tick the checkbox next to the item. Alternatively, you can open the current Workspace panel window to manage bookmarks for all of your applications.

Any bookmarked items which reside on removable disks will not be visible while that disk is not mounted — mounting the disk will cause the bookmarked items residing on that disk to become available again.

## Adding items to the strip

In addition to the Quick Access item, current Workspace item, and any applications you are currently running, you can add additional applications, files, and folders right onto the strip, in the fashion of OS X's Dock. Each item kept on the strip has its own icon (with associated pop-up menu) and tab (with associated panel window, available by clicking on the tab under its icon).



*Making an item available at all times:* Drag an item (or items) from Finder to WorkStrip's Quick Access icon, or if the item is a running application, select the 'Always' option from the 'Keep In Strip' entry in the application's menu.

*Making an item available for this Workspace only:* Drag an item (or items) from Finder to WorkStrip's current Workspace icon. Alternatively, if the item is a running application select the 'When (Workspace name) is active' option from the 'Keep In Strip' entry in the application's menu.

Any item that has been "kept" in the strip will show a tag in its lower left corner: A red tag indicates that the item will always be kept in the strip. An orange tag indicates that the item will only appear kept on the strip when the current Workspace is active. These visual indicator tags can be turned on and off in WorkStrip's Preferences window.

## Removing items from the strip

If you have added an item to the strip, either by dragging it onto the Quick Access or Workspace item, or by turning on a 'Keep on Strip' option, that item can be removed by selecting the 'Remove From Strip' option in the item's menu.

Files, folders and non-running applications will be removed immediately. Any running application will be removed when you quit that application.

Items can also be removed by dragging the item's tab away from the edge of the screen. Some items, including Quick Access, Workspace, and Finder, cannot be removed.

## Reordering Items on the Strip

In order to change the position of items on the strip, you must have the 'Manually arrange items kept on strip' option selected in the Behavior tab of WorkStrip X's Preferences window. To change the position of an item on the strip, click on the tab behind the item's icon and drag the tab along the strip to the position you would like.

Other items will rearrange themselves around the item you are moving. The order that you set is stored with the currently active Workspace, so you can set the order of the items on a per Workspace basis.

Some items, including Quick Access, Workspace, and Finder, cannot be moved.

## Internet/URL Management

In WorkStrip X you can bookmark Internet sites in the same way that you bookmark files. Simply drag any bookmark/favorite symbol (e.g. @ in Internet Explorer; lightning bolt in OmniWeb) from your browser into the item list on your web browser's panel window in WorkStrip. If the panel window for your browser is not already open, hover over the tab during your drag for a moment and the panel window will open.

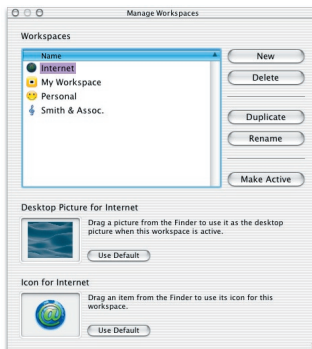
All web browsers recognized by WorkStrip share the same set of bookmarks within a Workspace, so the web site bookmarks you see in WorkStrip's menu for Internet Explorer will be the same ones that you see in OmniWeb, and adding bookmarks to any recognized web browser will have the same effect.

Note that WorkStrip X's ability to automatically track recently accessed web sites is only active when browsing using Microsoft Internet Explorer. However, bookmarking web sites in Workstrip can be done from many different web browsers.

## Manage Workspaces window

Here you can create new Workspaces or delete, duplicate, or rename existing ones. You may also drag any file icon to the icon well to change the selected Workspace's icon. You cannot duplicate the currently active Workspace — it must first be closed.

To provide a more visual clue as to which Workspace is currently active, you can set a custom desktop picture for each Workspace. Simply drag an image file onto the Desktop Picture item. When that Workspace is made active, the desktop picture will be changed to the picture you have set.



The Manage Workspaces window

## WorkStrip Trash

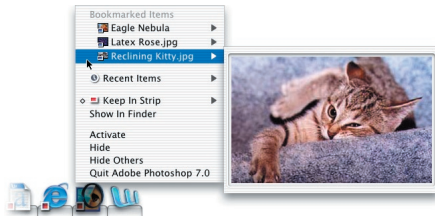
WorkStrip Trash gives you another way to access the Trash already present in OS X, formerly only available in the Dock or by pressing  $\text{⌘}$ -backspace on items in Finder windows. WorkStrip Trash sits completely separate from WorkStrip X's strip on your desktop and is very configurable. You can drag it wherever you'd like and click on it to access its contents. You can access the WorkStrip Trash Preferences window by holding down the control key while clicking (or clicking and holding) the Trash icon on your desktop, or via the Trash Options button on the WorkStrip X Preferences window. Most preferences are quite apparent, but some need explanation:

*Icons:* Defaults to the standard OS X trash icon, but you can change the empty and full icons by dragging other icons from Finder into these icon wells.

*'Empty Trash' command and locked items:* If set to "Handle in WorkStrip Trash", you can decide how you'd like WorkStrip to deal with locked files. However, when selecting "Empty Trash" from the Dock trash's menu or from Finder's menu bar, OS X will always Empty Trash by its own method, bypassing WorkStrip.

*Individual volume trash emptying:* If you have multiple volumes on your computer (e.g. a partitioned hard disk, multiple hard disks, or removable writable media), all ways of invoking Empty Trash on OS X will simply erase all trashed files on all volumes. If you hold down the option (or alt) key when bringing up WorkStrip Trash's menu, you can select a specific volume to empty. Note that when emptying trash in this manner, WorkStrip must handle the action itself, and will adhere to the guidelines you set in WorkStrip Trash Preferences even if the "'Empty Trash' command" setting is set to "Forward to Finder".

**Note:** When WorkStrip Trash is positioned on the menu bar, it may overlap other menu items. In this mode, the command key must be held down to allow WorkStrip Trash to be moved.



An image preview of a bookmarked item

## Previews

Anywhere in WorkStrip that a menu appears which includes a list of documents, you can view instant previews of many types of files without loading an application. Dynamic previews, such as sound and video, can be fully viewed by moving the mouse cursor over the actual preview. In addition to WorkStrip's internal ability to preview many document types, WorkStrip also employs QuickTime to preview many others. In WorkStrip you can preview files of these types, among others:

- *Image*
  - BMP, EPS, GIF, JPEG/JFIF, Photoshop, PICT, PNG, QTIF, TGA, TIFF
- *Sound*
  - AIFF, Apple Sound, AU, MIDI, MP3, SoundFont 2, Wave
- *Video/Animation*
  - Animated GIF, AVI, DV, Flash, MPG/MPEG, QuickTime Movie, QTVR
- *Other*
  - Adobe Acrobat (PDF)
  - Adobe Illustrator
  - Adobe InDesign
  - HTML
  - Microsoft Word
  - Microsoft Powerpoint
  - Plain Text and Text Clippings
  - Quark XPress
  - RTF and RTFD
  - URLs

Some document formats will not show previews in WorkStrip unless the document was saved with a previewing option enabled in the application used to create it. If WorkStrip isn't previewing a particular type of document, consult the manual for your application software to determine if it can embed previews. For example, to see a proper visual preview in WorkStrip of a Microsoft Word document, the document must have its preview option enabled. With the document open in Word, select Properties from the File menu. In the Properties window, go to the Summary tab and tick "Save preview picture" at the bottom.

Microsoft Word documents are unique in two ways. In order to display a preview of any kind in WorkStrip, they must not have been saved with the "Allow fast saves" option enabled in Word's Preferences/Save section. Secondly, if the above-mentioned "Save preview picture" option is not enabled for a Word document, instead of displaying a miniature version of the document's first page, WorkStrip will preview the beginning of the document's contents as plain, readable, unformatted text.

If no proper preview can be displayed for a file, its large icon (as visible in Finder) may be shown instead. See the reference entry for Preferences "Enable Previews" for further details on the handling of previews.

## Preferences

Many aspects of WorkStrip X's appearance and behavior can be adjusted in the WorkStrip X Preferences window, accessible from both the Quick Access menu and panel window. All changes to settings take place immediately. Appearance settings are self explanatory and are best understood by experimenting with them yourself.

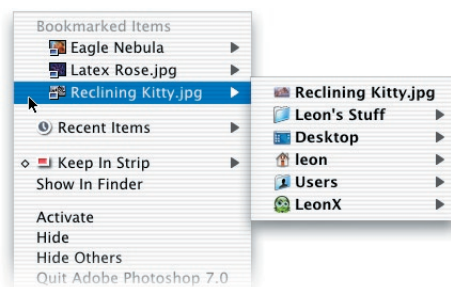
*Enable Previews:* When WorkStrip X needs to preview an image file, it is capable of generating a large preview on the fly or can use a pre-generated small preview embedded within the file, if it exists. Because generating previews on the fly may be slower, you can configure when WorkStrip will decide to do this:

- 'Always': Slower, but displays large high quality previews every time. With this option WorkStrip ignores any pre-existing built-in previews completely.
- 'When no built-in preview exists': Fast and small previews are used when a built-in one is available in the file being previewed, slow and high quality previews are made on the fly when not.
- 'Never': Always fast; small built-in previews are displayed when one is available in the file, otherwise no preview at all is displayed. In this mode WorkStrip will never generate a preview on the fly.

A pop-up menu allows you to set the maximum size that WorkStrip will restrain previews to. If your previews take too long to appear, or use too much screen space, you may want to have smaller previews.

You can also select if WorkStrip will render HTML previews roughly as they would appear in a web browser, or instead with simple raw text previews. Finally, because accessing data over a network is usually significantly slower than accessing your own hard disk, previewing files over the network is normally undesirable. If your network is fast, you can enable this with the "Preview files on server volumes" option.

You can temporarily toggle preview display behavior by holding down the command (⌘) key when clicking to generate a menu. See the reference section on Previews for more information about previews in general.



A path displayed in a menu

*Enable Item Path:* A path is a display of where a file or folder exists on your disk by showing the list of all parent folders to the root of the volume it exists on. WorkStrip allows you to maneuver through any level of a displayed path in any of its menus. You can temporarily toggle path display behavior by holding down the shift key when clicking to generate a menu.

*Track recently visited internet sites:* Under normal circumstances, WorkStrip keeps a list in each Workspace of the most recent 50 web sites visited in Internet Explorer. Disabling this feature will stop WorkStrip from recording newly visited web sites. Note that you can instantly toggle this behavior in the Quick Access menu.

*Automatically hide and show WorkStrip X:* To keep WorkStrip out of your way, you may wish to not have it visible at all times. As with OS X's Dock, when WorkStrip is hidden you may reveal it by moving the mouse to the edge of the screen where it resides. In addition, you have the option to keep the Quick Access item visible at all times. With the "Quick Access item always visible" option enabled, you can also elect to change WorkStrip's 'reveal' behavior with another option: "Only reveal WorkStrip X when over Quick Access". In this case, the strip will no longer appear when the mouse touches anywhere on the edge of the screen where it resides, but instead only when over the Quick Access item. You can force WorkStrip X to hide or show at any time by pressing ⌘-esc.

*Start automatically at login:* This setting is a shortcut which automatically adds or removes WorkStrip X from your System Preferences "Login" list as necessary. Changing this setting while your System Preferences application is running may have unexpected consequences.

*Automatic Items:* Options in this panel allow you to control which items are automatically added to the strip. The running applications list gives you more specific control and allows you to prevent individual applications from being added that have no particular benefit for being shown on the strip. For example, you may choose to keep the Clock and CPU Monitor applications hidden.

## Customer Support

If you don't find the answer to your question somewhere in this manual, you can e-mail [support@softchaos.com](mailto:support@softchaos.com) for assistance. Please include WorkStrip's full version number (found in the Quick Access panel window) with your e-mail.

## **Appendix: License Agreement**

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