Introduction To MultiView

Multiview was written to view up to four different AVI files without the need to run multiple instances of Microsoft's Media Player.

Although MultiView has been designed to be easy to use, the following Help topics are available:

System Requirements
The MultiView Main Window
The MultiView Menu
The MultiView Control Bar
Opening an AVI File
Playing an AVI File
Selecting the Active Window
Using the Zoom Command
Using the Sound Command
Using the Loop Command
Playing a Movie Backwards
About the Author

System Requirments

MultiView requires that the following software is installed on your PC:

Microsoft Visual Basic Runtime Module v3.0 (VBRUN300.DLL)
Microsoft Video For Windows Runtime
AVI files (necessary to have something to view!)

The hardware requirements are the same as for Video For Windows.

MultiView is optimized for use with 160 x 120 movies. It will half the size of any movies that are larger than that.

The MultiView Main Window

The MultiView Main Windows is composed of four viewing windows.

These windows are referred to in the Windows menu selection as Upper Left, Upper Right, Lower Left, and Lower Right. On the Control Bar these are referred to   as 1,2,3, and 4. The currently active window is indicated by a darker shadow. If the Control Bar is visible you can also determine the active window by checking which of the numbers on the Control Bar is darker than the rest. The Window menu item will also show the active window by having a check mark next to the name of the window.

An optional Control Bar is available by selecting Preferences from the menu, then clicking on Control Bar.

The MultiView Menu

The MultiView menu has five options.

These options, and their sub-commands are:

<u>File</u> - <u>Open</u>, <u>Close</u>, <u>Exit</u>
<u>Action</u> - <u>Play</u>, <u>Stop</u>, <u>Position To Start</u>, <u>Position To End</u>, <u>Loop</u>, <u>Reverse</u>
<u>Preferences</u> - <u>Control Bar</u>, <u>Sound</u>, <u>Zoom</u>
<u>Window</u> - Upper Right, Upper Left, Lower Left, Lower Right
<u>Help</u> - Help, About

Opening an AVI file

There are many ways of selecting an AVI file to be opened for use in MultiView.

The most obvious way is by selecting File from the MultiView menu bar, then choosing the Open... option. The Open AVI File dialogue is then displayed. When the file is selected the AVI file is opened into the currently selected window. This method is also used if you have the Control Bar displayed, and the Open button is clicked.

You may also bring up the Open AVI File dialogue by double clicking the window you would like to open the file into.

Another way of opening a file is by dragging an AVI file from File Manager and dropping it onto the MultiView Main window. The file is opened into the first available window.

Close the file by setting it's window to active, then either select Close from the File menu, or click on Close from the Control Bar.

Playing An AVI File

Once an AVI file has been <u>opened</u> into a MultiView window, you may choose to play this movie.

Choose Action from the <u>MultiView menu</u> and then select Play. This will start the movie playing in the <u>active window</u>.

You may also play an open movie by clicking on the play button located directly under the viewing window.

If the <u>Control Bar</u> is visible, click on the Play button to start playing the movie in the <u>active window</u>.

Choosing Stop from either the Action menu or the Control Bar, or by pressing the square Stop icon under the <u>active movie window</u>, will cancel the playing of the movie.

The MultiView Control Bar

The MultiView Control Bar is visible if you have selected Control Bar from the <u>Preferences menu</u>.

The Control Bar gives you easy access to all the menu items. As with the menu, the Action buttons pertain to the currently <u>active window</u>. The four buttons that represent the windows will indicate the active window if the number is bolder than the rest.

To hide the Control Bar you may either click on the Control Bar option on the <u>Preferences menu</u>, or simply minimize the Control Bar. This way an icon will be avaiable to you for easy access for making the Control Bar visible again.

Loop

The Loop command, available from the <u>Action menu</u> and from the <u>Command Bar</u>, will reset the current position of the <u>active movie</u> to the beginning and then start playing.

Position To Start

The Position To Start option on the <u>Action menu</u>, and the Start button on the <u>Control Bar</u> positions the <u>active movie</u> to the beginning in the stopped position.

Position To End

Selecting the Position To End option from the <u>Action menu</u>, or clicking on the End button from the <u>Control Bar</u> will position the active movie to the last frame in the movie. This comes in handy if you want to view the movie in <u>reverse</u>.

Reverse

Selecting Reverse from either the <u>Action menu</u> or from the <u>Control Bar</u> will start playing the <u>active movie</u> backwards.

Zoom

The Zoom option from the <u>Action menu</u>, or the Zoom On/Off button on the <u>Control Bar</u> will double the size of the <u>active window</u>.

This makes the <u>active window</u> the only visible window, however you can still change windows and view these in the Zoomed view.

The Window Menu

The Window menu give you a selection of the four Main MultiView Windows. The active window will have a check next to it. If an AVI file is open in a window, the file name will be ther in place of the positional name (Upper Left, Upper Right, etc.).

You can also select the window to become active my choosing it's number from the Control Bar, or by clicking once in the window.

Preferences Menu

The Preferences Menu allows you to select these three options:

Control Bar
When selected the Control Bar will be visible. Select again to hide the Control Bar. When enabled this option will be checked.

Sound
Selecting this will turn off the sound from all open AVI files. Selecting it again will turn the sound back on. If the sound is on this option will be checked.

Zoom
When the option is checked, the Zoom feature is enabled. Selecting this again will turn off the Zoom feature.

Sound

The Sound option can be selected by clicking   on the <u>Action menu</u>, or by clicking on the "Ear" button on the <u>Control Bar</u>.

This is used to enable and disable MultiView from generating sound.

Action Menu

If the active window contains an open AVI file, the Action Menu will be enabled. Otherwise this menu item is greyed out.

These commands are available when the Action menu is enabled:

Play
Start playing the movie in the active window.

Stop
Halt the movie in the active window.

Position To Start
Position the active window's movie to frame 0.

Position To End
Position the active window's movie to the last frame.

Loop
Play the movie in the active window from the beginning.

Reverse
Play the movie in the active window backwards.

File Menu

The File Menu gives you these three options:

Open...
Open an AVI file into the active window.

Close
Close the AVI file in the active window.

Exit
End the MultiView program.

Exit

The Exit command, selected either from the <u>File menu</u> or from the <u>Control Bar</u> ends the MultiView program.

Active Window

The Active Window can be determined by the checked item on the Window menu list, by a darker shading around the window, or, if the Control Bar is visible, a darkened number on the Window selection buttons. Select the window to become active by using the Window menu, clicking once on the window, or clicking on a number on the Control Bar.

Open File Dialogue

The Open File Dialogue allows you to select the AVI file to open in the <u>active window</u>.

Highlight the file name and click OK, or double click the file name, to open the file.

About

MultiView was written by Robert Reinstein in 1994.

Robert is a Microsoft Windows Certified Professional, and is currently seeking a position in the greater New York area as a Visual Basic programmer, and/or as a Microsoft Windows support person.

The future development of MultiView depends on your vote!

See the About option on the Help menu for more details.

Help Menu

The Help menu gives you these choices:

Help - view this Help file

About - information about MultiView and it's author

VBRUN300.DLL is the runtime DLL for Microsoft's Visual Basic version 3.0.

This program was written using the Visual Basic Professional Edition.

Microsoft Video For Windows Runtime is available from most commercial bulletin board systems, such as CompuServe, and on Microsoft's own BBS.