Composer Notes Demo Version
Short Tutorial

To order a full version of Composer Notes, please contact UDI Software at 800-289-1948, or if outside U.S. 415-382-8840

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1   Introduction

Thank you for your interest in Composer Notes. We recommend you print this 14 page document using your favorite word processor. This will make it easier for you to follow the tutorial.

The Composer Notes Demo Version documentation consists of this printed Short Tutorial and the context-sensitive on-line help file. The purpose of the printed manual is to get you started using Composer Notes. We recommend that you first follow the tutorial in this manual. The full version of Composer Notes includes a very comprehensive manual. The table of contents for the Composer Notes manual is enclosed in the Appendix.

If you need help on a certain feature, please use the on-line help. To call the main index of the on-line help file, press F1. To access the help topic related to your mouse location, press CTRL F1. The on-line help has been linked to Composer Notes, of course, by using Composer Notes instead of the standard methods.

1.1   Instruction Conventions

Fundamental Composer Notes concepts, such as menu items, commands and titles are printed in **bold**.

Sentences and paragraphs that begin with a number [1.] instruct you to take certain actions.

When you are instructed to select, choose or click on a menu item or button, you should point to it and click once with the left mouse button.

When you are asked to highlight a menu item, click on it once using the mouse or select it using the arrow keys.

When you are instructed to highlight a word or phrase, place the mouse cursor on the first character while holding down the left mouse button, drag the cursor to the end of the desired text and release the mouse button. The text will appear inverted on a dark background.

1.2   Contacting UDI Software

If you would like to buy the full version of Composer Notes for only US $129, or if you have any comments concerning Composer Notes, please let us know. You can contact us at 800-289-1948, or if outside U.S. 415-382-8840. You can also send us email on CompuServe at 74674,30, or via Internet at 74674.30@compuserve.com.

Since Composer Notes is a development tool that is highly dependent on the programs it is used with, we can only help you with problems associated directly with the functionality of Composer Notes. If you have problems capturing certain Windows objects, you should experiment with the options available to find a solution that works well for you.

We have not limited the access to the object capturing options, even though it may cause problems in some applications. If you can capture objects but experience problems when testing or running your application, it usually means that some key component that is used to identify different objects in Composer Notes is changing constantly and cannot be recognized reliably. In this case you should trace back your steps and remove the link that is causing problems, or replace it with a link to some other object instead.

1.3   Trademarks

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2   Quick Overview of Composer Notes' Features

Composer Notes is the new Windows interface and helpfile "glutility" for Windows® users. Without programming or the need for source code, Composer Notes allows you to stick custom messages and help topics to any element in one or more Windows applications. Composer Notes, an easy to use, point & click, cross application development tool becomes your "SuiteStick" and turns your standard application software into company specific customized application suites.

Link any Windows object to help instantly!

- Point & click capture of most Windows objects without programming or needing source code.

- Windows objects include menus, individual menu items, dialog boxes, buttons in dialog boxes and editable fields—offering a comprehensive scope of message attachment.

- Capturing objects is easy and only requires a single mouse click.

- Object ID display changes color for easy recognition of captured objects.

- Choose what message the object is linked to—a title bar message, bubble help or help topics. Linked help topics can contain anything available to the standard Windows help engine, WinHelp, including hotspots, program launches, buttons, etc.

- Create links for the captured objects immediately upon capture, or later.

- Composer Notes conveniently lists which objects are captured and which have already been linked to a help topic, bubble help or title bar message.

- Capture objects from any number of applications and vendors for true cross-application personalized online procedures.

Comprehensive Editing features

- Customize background color and text styles within title bar messages and bubble help for easy recognition of your personalized help application.

- Customize the timing for title bar message and bubble help display.

- Define separate key combinations for context-sensitive help, title bar messages, bubble help, and display of your custom help index. Your customized help file can be complementary to the target application's context-sensitive help, or replace it.

- Link to help topics created with any Help Authoring Tool

- Automatic launch and edit function for help topics created with WYSI-Help Composer.

- Create your online messages in one file and customize their display to the level of your user. Turn individual object links on or off for novice or advanced users.

- Group link multiple objects to a single help topic, title bar or bubble help message—ensuring the same message appears for related objects.

- Create and benefit from cross-application procedures in a matter of minutes.

Context-sensitive help

- Glue company specific information to any number of Windows applications.

- Attach context-sensitive information without programming or need for the application' s source code.

- Put your company procedures online and attach them in context to your Windows application suite.

- Option to supersede the original help file or offer the user both the original and custom help files.

- Provide Short Help messages quickly without the user having to access the help engine.

Composer Notes Applications/Benefits:

- Write context-sensitive helpfiles for any Windows application without programming or source code!

- Capture objects from any number of applications for true cross-application personalized online procedures.

- Write additional help and instructions that ease challenging applications using bubble help.

- Create bubble help in foreign languages, and stick it to your applications for your multilingual office needs.

- Save time training office temps and new employees! Create an online routine for basic office functions in less time that it takes to train an employee!

- Eliminate the use of "stickies" around your screen with your online messages.

Composer Notes Surveillance Engine

After the objects are captured and linked, the Composer Notes application can be run on any computer with a small runtime surveillance component. This Surveillance engine monitors mouse movements and help requests for the user. It then launches the appropriate action you (or someone else in your organization) defined when the captured object comes into "focus."

3 CREATING YOUR FIRST COMPOSER NOTES APPLICATION

This chapter is a tutorial consisting of step-by-step instructions for creating a very basic Composer Notes application.

Creating Context-sensitive help involves linking a Short Help message and a help topic to an object in the target application. The first step is to select the target application to which you want to attach the help to. After you have selected the right target application, you need to identify the individual objects to which you want to link help. For this practice session, choose any Windows based word processing application. The examples here will use Windows Write, but you may use any word processor if you want to.

Tasks to be accomplished are as follows:

- Opening Composer Notes and preparing to create a Composer Notes application

- Loading an application

- Capturing an object

- Defining a link

- Editing a Short Help message

- Testing the link

3.1 Opening Composer Notes and preparing to create a Composer Notes application

1. Start Composer Notes by double-clicking its icon in the Composer Notes 2.1 group window.
Once Composer Notes loads, the main window opens.

Composer Notes uses the extension **.SRV** for its files. When Composer Notes is launched, it automatically opens the most recent .SRV file used. If your main window looks a little different from the one shown in Figure 3.1, it may be that someone has already created a file with this copy of Composer Notes. Sometimes people capture objects and create links and then save the file with the default name UNTITLED.SRV. For this reason, it is good to make sure you are creating a new file by selecting the **New** command from the **File** menu. Figure 3.1 shows what a new, untitled Composer Notes file looks like.

Figure 3.1 A new, untitled file
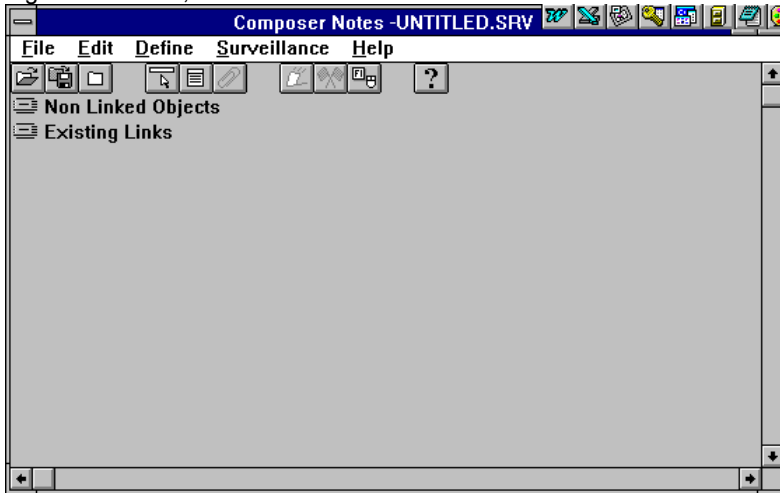
2.　　　Select **New** from the **File** menu. Composer Notes will open a new file named UNTITLED.SRV.

For this tutorial, you want Composer Notes' Preferences set to their default settings. To make sure that the Preferences are set properly, take a look at them.

3.　　　Select **Preferences** from the **Edit** menu. The **Preferences** dialog box opens (Figure 3.2).

4.　A preference is on when there is an **X** in the box in front of it. Click on the box to turn preferences on and off. Make sure the preferences are set as shown. In particular, make sure that **Immediate Definition** and **Automatic Launch** are on. Immediate Definition allows you to define a link for an object immediately upon capture of the object. Automatic Launch causes Composer Notes to load applications you select automatically.

Figure 3.2　　The Preferences dialog box
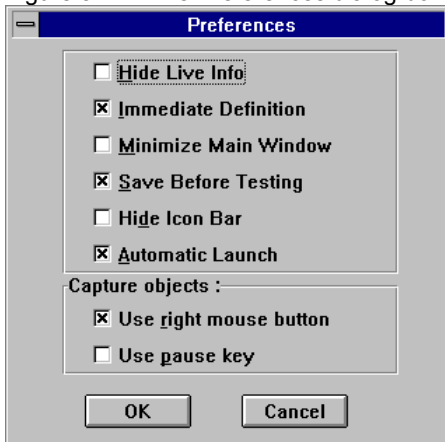
You are now ready to load an application.

3.2　Loading an application

To create context-sensitive help for an application both Composer Notes and the selected application must be running. You may load the selected application from within Composer Notes.

1.　Choose **Applications to Load** from the **Define** Menu. The **Applications to Load** dialog box opens (Figure 3.3).
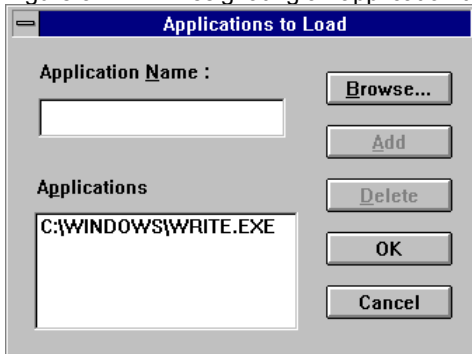
Figure 3.3　　　The Applications to Load dialog box
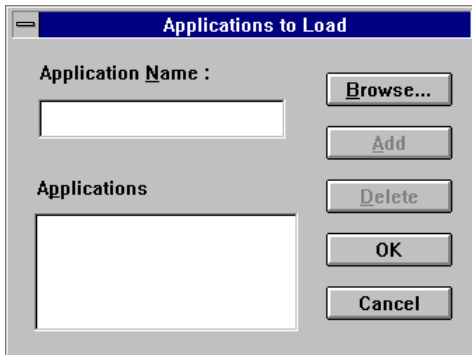
2. Click the **Browse** button. You will see the standard Windows **Browse** dialog box.

3. Browse through your files until you find the file name for your favorite Windows based word processor. (The illustrations for this tutorial use Windows Write, but you may choose any word processor that runs in Windows.) If you use Windows Write, you can usually find it in the WINDOWS directory. The file to look for is WRITE.EXE. Select the file name, and click **OK.**

4. In the **Applications to Load** dialog box, click on the **Add** button to add the selected application to the **Applications** list (Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4   Designating an application to load

Click on the **OK** button. The **Applications to Load** dialog box will close. Composer Notes will load the word processor you selected.

Introduction

Once you have added an application to the **Applications to Load** list, Composer Notes will automatically load that application every time your Composer Notes file is opened, provided that the **Automatic Launch** preference is on. You may enter multiple applications using **Applications to Load** and Composer Notes will load them all. This allows you to create cross-application context-sensitive help files.

3.3   Capturing an object

Now that your selected word processor has loaded, note the presence of the Control window. The Control window is a bar shaped window attached to the top or bottom of your application. The Control window tells you what object the mouse is pointing to, and whether it is captured and linked. The name "Composer Notes" appears in the Control window in red. The rest of the text in the Control window is blue.

Figure 3.5   The Control window

1. Activate your target application by clicking anywhere in its window. Use the Windows Task List if it is hidden by the Composer Notes window by clicking ALT TAB until you find the right application.

2. Point to the **File** menu in your word processor's window. Click the ***right*** mouse button once. A new hand shaped pointer will appear. You may have to wait a moment for the pointer to change shape.

*   If the right mouse button has a special function within the application from which you are capturing objects, you may, instead, capture an object by pointing to it and pressing the **Pause** key. The **Capture objects: use Pause key** preference must be on. Use the **Preferences** command on the **Edit** menu to toggle this preference on and off.

3. Move the pointer over the menu names. Note that the menus open, and the text in the Control window changes, depending upon what object the pointer is resting on.

4. Move the pointer back to the File menu. The menu will open. Point to the **New** command. This is the object you will capture.

5. Click the right mouse (or press the Pause key) button again. The text in the Control window will turn yellow., and the **Link Object(s)** dialog box will open.

You may now define a link for the **New** command and create a Short Help message to go with the link.

3.4   Defining a link

The **Link Object(s)** dialog box will display a suggested link name in the **Destination Link Name** edit box (Figure 3.6). The suggested link name is the title of the object. In this case, the title of the **New** command is "New," so **New** appears in the Destination Link Name edit box. You may keep this link name or change it. For this tutorial, you should keep **New** as the link name.

Introduction

Figure 3.6   The Link Object(s) dialog box with a suggested link name
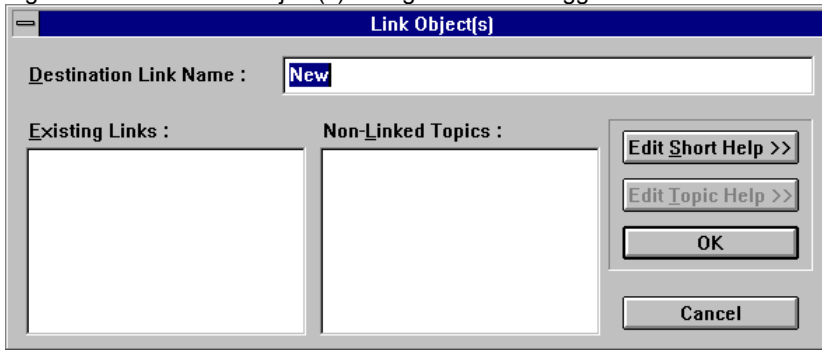
To simply define the link, you could go ahead and close the dialog box and the link would be defined. Do not do this now! You are going to link a Short Help message to the link.

If you clicked on OK by accident, just go back to your target application and capture another object, such as the Open command. You will then be able to follow the tutorial easily by linking the help to another command instead of the New command.

3.5   Editing a Short Help message

1. Click the **Edit Short Help>>** button in the **Link Object(s)** dialog box. The **Link Object(s)** dialog box closes and the **Short Help Text Editor** opens (Figure 3.7).

2. In the top left edit box the link name **New** appears. This is the link for which you will create a Short Help message. The edit box on the top right has a blinking cursor. Enter the text "Opens a new, untitled file." in the top right field.

Introduction

Figure 3.7   The Short Help Text Editor
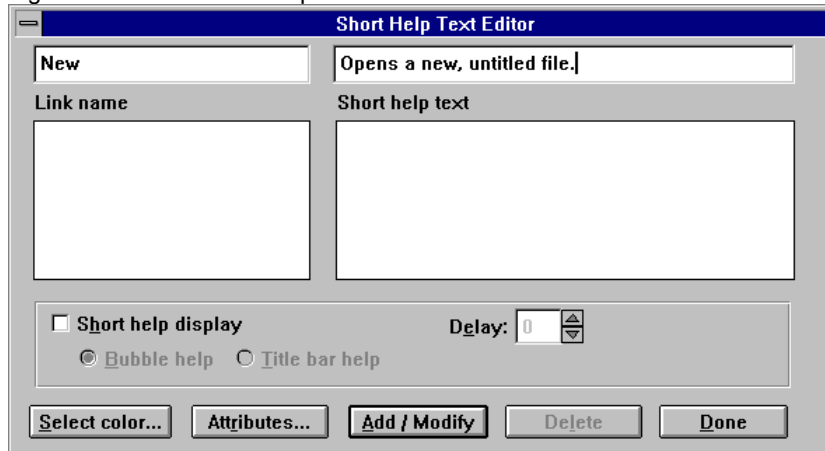
3. Click the **Add/Modify** button. The link name is moved to the **Link Name** list, and the Short Help message text is moved to the **Short Help Text** list.

4. Before completing the link, you want to turn the **Short help display** on. The default setting for Short help display is unchecked, so your Short Help message will not be displayed until you turn this setting on. To do this, make sure that an **X** appears in the small box next to the words **Short help display** in the bottom left of the Short Help Text Editor. If not, click in the box. Short help display is now on (Figure 3.8)

Figure 3.8   Turning on Short help display
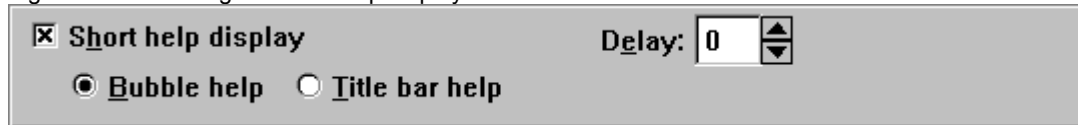
5. Click the **Done** button to complete the link. If you click only on Done, without clicking on **Add/Modify** button, the Short Help text does not get updated.

You will now create another link, for practice.

6. Click on the word processor window to activate it.

7. Point to the **File** menu and click the right mouse button (or press the Pause key) once. The hand shaped pointer appears.

8. If the **File** menu does not open automatically, move the pointer to the right and back onto **File**. Point to the **Open** command. Click the right mouse button (or press the Pause key) once to capture it.

The suggested link name will be **Open**. You may change it if you wish, but it is typically easier to keep track of the captured objects if you use the same names as for the menu commands.

9. Click the **Edit Short Help>>** button to open the **Short Help Text Editor**.

10. In the top right edit box, enter "Allows you to open an existing file." Figure 3.9 shows what the Short Help Text Editor should look like at this point.

11. Click the **Add/Modify** button to keep your Short Help text. The link name is moved to the **Link Name** list, and the Short Help message text is moved to the **Short Help Text** list.

Figure 3.9   Editing Short Help in the Short Help Text Editor
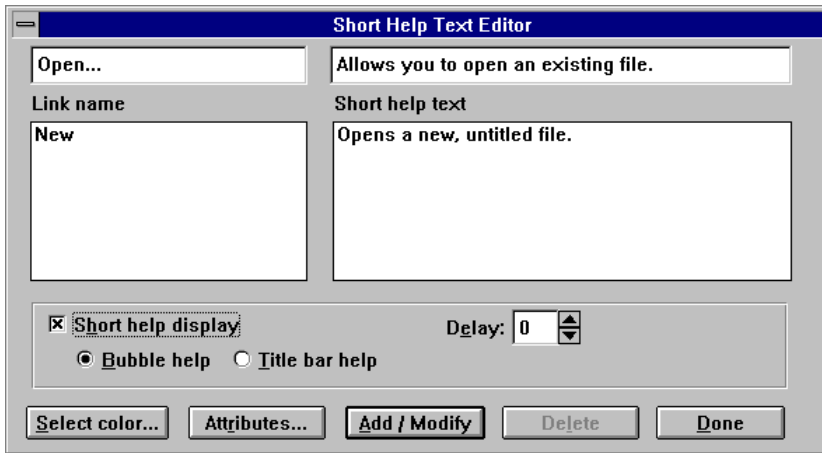
12. Click on the **Done** button.

You may now capture and create Short Help messages for other objects.

3.6   Testing the link

After you have finished capturing objects and linking them to Short Help, you can test your new Composer Notes application to see the Short Help messages. If you had also created Topic Help, you could test your links to Topic Help and see the Help Window open and display the relevant topic. In this tutorial you defined Short Help only, so no Topic Help will display.

You can test your help file from within Composer Notes by putting Composer Notes into **Test mode**. This feature allows you to test your context-sensitive help as you develop it.

From the **Surveillance** Menu, choose **Test Mode** or click on the test button on the toolbar.

When you exit **Edit mode**, by switching to **Test mode**, Composer Notes automatically saves your file if you made any changes to it. In this case, the **Save As...** dialog box appears because you are working on a new file.

1.   In the **Save As** dialog box, set the directory to save your Composer Notes file in to the **TUTORIAL** directory that is inside the main Composer Notes directory (probably CNOTES). Enter the file name **LESSON1** and click **OK** to save your file.

*   If you do not specify a directory in which to save your Composer Notes application, Composer Notes will save your file into the directory containing the most recent application you designated to load.

Since you have switched to **Test mode**, Composer Notes automatically switches to the word processor application once your Composer Notes file is saved. Note that the Control window now only displays the title **Composer Notes** in red. This is to let you know that Composer Notes is in Test mode. The Control Window will not appear in your final Composer Notes application.

2. Pull down the **File** menu and position your mouse cursor on the **New** command *without* selecting the command. Do not click your left mouse button. Wait a moment and look for the Short Help message to appear. It will either appear in a bubble next to the pointer or in the title bar of the word processor, depending upon the Display setting that was selected in the Short Help Text Editor.

It takes a moment for Short Help messages to appear because they are purposely set to appear after a delay. This way the messages only appear when the user pauses a moment to wait for a help message. Later on in this manual you will see how to change the delay setting. You will also learn how to change the colors and fonts used to display Short Help, and how to switch between bubble display and title bar display.

3. Move the pointer onto the **Open** command and see the Short Help message appear.

4. Move the pointer over any other menu items that you captured and linked to a Short Help message.

After you have finished testing all of your links it is necessary to switch from **Test mode** back to **Edit mode** to be able to modify your Composer Notes file.

5. Switch back to the Composer Notes window. (Use the Windows Task List if necessary).

6. To disable Test mode, choose **Test Mode** from the **Surveillance** menu, click on the end test icon, or click once on the Control window.

This completes the creation of your first help file.

7. Exit Composer Notes by selecting **Exit** from the **File** menu.

Appendix

Table of Contents for The Unlimited Version of Composer Notes