- - -Resource Bar- - -
Shareware By Tim Denihan
$2.00 Registration Fee

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Dear Fellow Computer Nerd,

     Three days ago I read an article about how we could get the many Visual Basic programs on our machines to open quicker. The suggestion was to put a small application in the "Run" or "Load" line in you Win.ini file. This would get the VBRUN100.DLL file up into memory and thus you wouldn't have to read it off the hard disk (much more time consuming!) each time you loaded a VB app. I had seen, and even tried several iconized type clock and memory/resources type programs written in VB that should have sufficed but the only ones that made any sense were the ones that stayed "On Top" so that you could always be kept abreast of your status. The problem with those were that they seemed to always be in the way of the bottom "status line/ribbon" and I could not find one that was moveable. So, necessity being the mother of invention,I sat down to write a 3 or 4 hour program to do exactly what I needed. The more I wrote the more I realized what I wanted and I turned it into a training exercise. I not only learned about the API calls associated with the "Stay on Top" feature but I decided to dabble in how to write .INI files (and then of course came the necessity to read from it), and how to make calls to the sound capabilities of Windows 3.1. Well to make a long story shorter, 10 days later I finished. What I had was an education in API calling and made several new acquaintances on CIS because I have this habit of painting myself into a corner frequently. Thanks to all the VB gurus on the MSBASIC forum I now have 3 times the program I originally set out to write and have further educated myself in Visual Basic.

Quick start:

Requirements:

1). Windows Version 3.1 or higher

2). An installed sound card, if you wish to take advantage of the clock sounds (speak.exe, a sound driver for the standard PC speaker available from Microsoft for free, will substitue for the sound card. On

CIS type GO MSL and browse using the keyword "sound". Leave me an E-Mail message if you have trouble finding it).

3). The file VBRUN100.DLL, installed in your Windows\System directory (all Visual Basic programs require this, you may already have it and if you don't you will probably want / need it sooner or later).

Installation:

1). Copy ding.wav, ben.wav, and bigben.wav to your Windows directory.

2). Make a new directory named "Resource" and copy resource.exe (and optionally resource.wri to it) You may copy these files to your Windows directory if you wish.

3). Copy threed.vbx to the Windows\System directory. If there already is one there check the file dates and use which ever one is the most recent.

4). Create a new program item (see your Windows documentation) for Resource Bar.

5). If you want to start it each time you use Windows include it in the Run= line in the Win.ini file. Eg... "Run=C:\resource\resource.exe". Just add this line manually behind whatever is already there leaving a space between the last one or use the Program Manager to have it start it for you (again see your Windows documentation for details).

6). Start the program and double click on the "Bar" and press the "Help" button for details.

The files that are included in the package are as follows:

ding.wav...........The sound file that makes the single dinging sound. This and   all of the below sound (.wav) files should be put in your   Windows directory or in the directory you start Resource Bar   from.

bigben.wav.......The sound file that is the first "bong" at the top of the hour   and includes the sound of the clock "winding up".

ben.wav.............The sound file that is played after the above bigben.wav   (other than at 1:00) that has the same sound but not the   "wind up".

resource.exe......The main program file. You can drag it to a folder on

the desktop and make it a program item but more likely you'll want to include it and it's path in the RUN= line in your Win.ini file. Eg... Run=C:\resource\ resource.exe. See your Windows manual for details about both options.

threed.vbx...............The library file that gives the forms and buttons the 3-D effects. If you already have a copy of this check to see if this one is more recent. There was an update not too long ago. This file should go into the Windows\System sub directory. I believe that it works ok if you keep it in the directory in which you have Resource.exe but this file has the potential to be used by many programs (not just mine) and the "Computer Correct" way is to keep it in the System directory..

resource.wri.............This file.

        You will also need VBRUN100.DLL in your Windows\System directory but due to it's size and proliferation I have not included it in this package. You can obtain it free if you have a CIS account.   Look in the Microsoft Basic forum (GO MSBASIC) in library #5, vbrun1.zip, I believe is the name. This program requires Windows Version 3.1 or greater. This is due to the way I have programmed the ability to stay on top of all other windows and of course the sound capabilities. If you have not yet upgraded I strongly urge you to do so... many other advantages are available other than just the sound capabilities.

Operation:

        Once the program is loaded and on the screen just double click on it and click on the help button to get the details... it's pretty simple and self explanatory. A file named "Resource.ini" is written to your Windows directory the first time you make a change to the sound options. This file must stay in that directory if you wish Resource Bar to "remember" your preferences each time you start it.

Hints:

        If you want different sounds to play in place of the ones I have included simply select the ones you want, copy them to the Resource (or whatever you named it) or Windows directory and rename the files to bigben.wav, ben.wav, and ding.wav and they will play in place of the ones that came with the program (see file descriptions above to see when each particular named file plays).

ALL computer operations come to a screeching halt while the chimes sound. While this has caused absolutely no problems (other than delaying my work for a momentarily) I doubt that fate would be so kind if you are downloading a file over your modem. I assume that you could set (relax) your communication software to allow for this but it would seem to make more sense to disable the chimes while on-line. Just double click on it and set both "top" and "bottom" of hour to "none" and reset them to your preference when finished downloading. If the delay bothers you when in "not so critical" programs you will find that the "ding" option takes much less time to play than the BigBen sound.

Novice Programmers:

If you decide to register the program I will gladly make the source code available. Send a disk and an extra $1.00 for mailing or, if you have access to CIS, tell me in a note that you want the code, and who to send it to, and I'll upload it to you. I have documented it VERY well and kept the use of sub_ procedures to a minimum. Though it isn't good programming practice, it makes it a lot easier for a novice (like myself) to review another programmer's code. This program has great examples of the famed API calls and believe it or not it's not as mystical as I first thought. API calls are used to get the Version number of Windows that the user has, several are made to keep the form "ON TOP", and several more to allow you to "drag" around this captionless form. Although the program appears to be an odd shaped "icon" it is actually a "form" without borders and no caption bar. It was quite a treat trying to figure out how to allow a user to move it with the mouse.   Also a very simple call is made for the clock chimes.

Many thanks go out to the many willing helpers on the MSBASIC forum on CIS for their patience in answering my questions when the manuals and many books I've purchased failed to answer my questions.

Registration:

This is a shareware program and I'm asking what I think is a very reasonable $2.00 to register it. This is a **fully functional** program. You will get no "buy me" screens or other unsolicited advertisements (known to some of us as aggravation screens). Through these moneys authors like myself break even (if we're lucky) on a hobby that gives you small specialized programs that otherwise would probably never be written by the large software companies. It also helps my "domestic relationship" when it appears that the time I spend staring into the

moniter is giving something back. Please send your registration fee to:

Timothy J. Denihan
4807 Shadyway Dr.
Arlington, Texas 76018

Also feel free to contact me by E-Mail on Compuserve, my number is 70600,745.

Warranty:

No warranty is expressed or implied. I have tested Resource Bar on my own, and other machines for several weeks. Myself and several friends have had no problems with it. I played around with Afterdark screen blanker and couldn't get it to cause any problems with that program either, even when Afterdark sounds were active. **Please realize that you use Resource Bar at your own risk.** Againg, do be aware that **ALL** computer operations come to a screeching halt while the chimes sound. While this has caused absolutely no problems (other than delaying my work for a minute) I doubt that fate would be so kind if you are downloading a file over your modem. I assume that you could set (relax) your communication software to allow for this but it would seem to make more sense to disable the chimes while on-line. Just double click on it and set both "top" and "bottom" of hour to "none" and reset them to your preference when finished downloading.

Thanks for trying and hopefully buying Resource Bar!!
Sincerely,
Tim