

Ventriloquist

COLLABORATORS

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Chapter 1

Ventriloquist

1.1 Ventriloquist User Guide: Table of Contents

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1.2 Copyright

All software and documentation in the Ventriloquist archive is Copyright © 1993-1996 by Daniel L. Barrans. All Rights Reserved. The software and documentation in the Ventriloquist archive is

shareware
, and is NOT in the public domain.

1.3 Disclaimer

All software and documentation in the Ventriloquist archive is provided "as is". No representations or warranties are made with respect to the accuracy, reliability, performance, currentness, or operation of this software and documentation, and all use is at your own risk. The

author
assumes no responsibility or liability
whatsoever with respect to your use of these materials.

1.4 Distribution

Permission is hereby granted to distribute the Ventriloquist archive containing the executables and documentation for non-commercial purposes so long as the archive and its contents are not modified in any way.

The Ventriloquist archive may not be distributed for profit.

Permission is explicitly granted to Fred Fish to distribute the Ventriloquist archive as part of his freely-distributable Amiga software collection.

Permission is explicitly granted to AmiNet to distribute the Ventriloquist archive as part of the AmiNet freely-distributable software archive.

1.5 Author

All programs and documentation in the Ventriloquist archive were written by:

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1.6 Shareware Registration

Ventriloquist is a shareware product. It is NOT public domain ↔
software.

Shareware authors depend on financial support from customers like you to enable them to continue producing quality products. Please support shareware authors by paying for the shareware products you use.

If you find this software useful, please support further development by sending \$30.00 in US funds to the

author
. Please include your address

so I can send

licensing
instructions. It's most convenient for me to

send licensing instructions by e-mail, so if you have an e-mail address, please provide it when you register.

If you have already registered, please encourage others to register also. Thank you for your support!

Please send your shareware payment to:

Daniel L. Barrans
P.O. Box 281
Uwchland, PA 19480
U.S.A.

1.7 Shareware Reminder Screen

Unregistered copies of
Ventriloquist
will occasionally display

a screen to remind you to register by sending me your shareware payment. Once you have

registered
your copy of the software, I

will send instructions for installing a license file, which will disable the reminder screen.

1.8 Introduction

This document describes
Ventriloquist
, a utility for remote control

of Amigas on an Amiga Envoy local area network. Ventriloquist lets you control any of several Amigas using the keyboard and mouse of any one of them. In effect, this lets you use several Amigas as if they were a single computer with several screens.

VPrefs

, a preferences program,
is also included to help in configuring the options the program offers.

Ventriloquist is most useful if you can see the screens of all Amigas you're using it with. Otherwise, it'll be difficult for you to control the other Amigas effectively.

1.9 Features

- Control any Amiga on an Amiga Envoy network using the keyboard and mouse of any other Amiga on the same network.
- Switch control from one Amiga to another by typing a key combination or by moving the mouse pointer off any edge of the screen.
- Choose which key combinations to type or which directions to move the mouse to switch control from one Amiga to another.
- Choose which other Amigas you can control from each Amiga.
- Choose which other Amigas can control each Amiga.
- Choose whether all mouse movements are sent for smoothness, or whether they are combined for faster operation on slow networks.
- Choose how fast the mouse must be moving off the edge of the screen to switch control to another Amiga.
- Choose how you're notified when you switch control from one Amiga to another: banner window, beep, or no notification.
- Complete user documentation in AmigaGuide format.
- Includes a program to reboot an Amiga from a Workbench Tools menu option.

1.10 System Requirements

The software in this archive requires Workbench 2.04 or later, and Amiga Envoy network software release 1.4 or later. Here is a list of all disk based Amiga shared libraries required by this software:

Library Name	Version
amigaguide.library	37
asl.library	37
commodities.library	37
envoy.library	37
iffparse.library	37

nipc.library 40

1.11 Files In This Archive

File Name	Description
Ventriloquist.readme	a description for Aminet.
Ventriloquist.guide	this file.
Ventriloquist.guide.info	icon file for Ventriloquist.guide.
Ventriloquist	the Ventriloquist program itself.
Ventriloquist.info	icon file for Ventriloquist.
VPrefs	the VPrefs preferences program.
VPrefs.info	icon file for VPrefs.
VReboot	the VReboot program.
VReboot.info	icon file for VReboot.

1.12 Installation

You should install both Ventriloquist and VPrefs on each Amiga you expect to use for initiating keyboard and mouse input, and each Amiga you want to control remotely. You should also install VReboot on each Amiga you want to reboot without using the keyboard on that Amiga.

For installation details for each program, read the corresponding program installation instructions:

Ventriloquist Installation

VPrefs Installation

VReboot Installation

1.13 Quick Start

1. Make sure Amiga Envoy is properly set up and running on all Amigas where you intend to use this software.
 2. Install
Ventriloquist
and
VPrefs
on each Amiga where you intend
to use this software.
 3. Choose an Amiga you want to control from (host A), and an Amiga you want to control (Host B).
 4. Run
VPrefs
on Host A.
 5. Click on the Add... button next to the
Server list
in the
VPrefs main window
, which will make the
VPrefs server window
appear.
 6. Type in the host name of Host B into the
Server Name
gadget in the
VPrefs server window
.
 7. Select the
Hot Key
checkbox in the
VPrefs server window
. This will
use "left_amiga F10" as the default hot key.
 8. Click on the
Use button
in the
VPrefs server window
.
 9. Click on the
Save button
in the
VPrefs main window
.
 10. Run
Ventriloquist
-

on both Host A and Host B.

11. On Host A, press F10 while holding down the left Amiga key. Any keyboard or mouse input after you do this will appear on Host B.
12. To switch back to controlling Host A, press F10 while holding down the left Amiga key again.

1.14 Ventriloquist Program

Ventriloquist is a commodity program that watches to see when you type a special hot key or move the mouse to the edge of the screen. When you do this, Ventriloquist will connect to another copy of itself running on another Amiga and will cooperate with that copy to make it look as if you were directly using the keyboard and mouse on that Amiga.

For more details on commodities, see your Workbench User's Guide.

Ventriloquist has no visible user interface. It can be controlled with the included

VPrefs preferences program and with the Exchange commodity program supplied with Workbench 2.04 or later.

Ventriloquist Installation

Ventriloquist Startup

Ventriloquist Termination

1.15 Ventriloquist Installation

Install
Ventriloquist

on each Amiga where you want to use it by copying it to your SYS:Tools/Commodities drawer, or to an alternate location of your own choice. You can copy it by dragging the icon with the mouse, or by typing this shell command:

```
Copy Ventriloquist#? SYS:Tools/Commodities
```

Modify your system to run Ventriloquist at startup time by adding this command to your S:user-startup file:

```
Run >NIL: Ventriloquist
```

If you install Ventriloquist someplace other than in SYS:Tools/Commodities, make sure the directory you installed it in is in your command path, or you

will need to change the command shown above to include the directory name.

1.16 Ventriloquist Startup

Ventriloquist
can be started either from a shell or from Workbench.

When run from a shell, Ventriloquist uses this command line template:

```
CX_PRIORITY/N/K
```

CX_PRIORITY sets the commodity priority of Ventriloquist. If you also run other commodity programs on both Amigas, set this higher than the other commodities' priorities if you want the hot key to be passed to the other Amiga. This defaults to 0.

When run from Workbench, Ventriloquist supports the CX_PRIORITY and DONOTWAIT tool types, just like the commodity programs supplied with Workbench.

1.17 Ventriloquist Termination

You can terminate
Ventriloquist
any of several ways:

1. Run it again (which will cause it to exit),
2. Remove it using the Exchange program in SYS:Tools/Commodities, or
3. Send it a Control-C.

1.18 VPrefs Program

VPrefs is a preferences program that lets you control how Ventriloquist will work. If you're already familiar with the way the standard Amiga preferences programs work under Workbench 2.04 and above, this program should look familiar to you.

For more details on preferences, see your Workbench User's Guide.

VPrefs Installation

VPrefs Startup

VPrefs Termination

VPrefs Windows

VPrefs Menus

1.19 VPrefs Installation

Install
VPrefs

on each Amiga where you want to use it by copying it to your SYS:Prefs drawer, or to an alternate location of your own choice. You can copy it by dragging the icon with the mouse, or by typing this shell command:

```
Copy VPrefs#? SYS:Prefs
```

1.20 VPrefs Startup

VPrefs

can be started either from a shell or from Workbench.

When run from a shell, VPrefs uses this command line template:

```
FROM,EDIT/S,USE/S,SAVE/S,PUBSCREEN/K
```

FROM lets you specify a preferences file to open. This must be a file that was previously saved with the

Project/Save As...

menu option in VPrefs. If the FROM option is not provided, the default preferences file will be opened.

EDIT will open the

VPrefs main window

for editing. This is done

by default, unless you specify the SAVE or USE option.

USE will use the file specified with the FROM option without opening the VPrefs main window.

SAVE will save the file specified with the FROM option without opening the VPrefs main window.

PUBSCREEN tells VPrefs which public screen to open its window on.

This defaults to the workbench screen.

When run from Workbench, VPrefs supports the ACTION=EDIT, ACTION=USE, ACTION=SAVE, and PUBSCREEN tool types, just like the preferences programs supplied with Workbench.

1.21 VPrefs Termination

You can terminate
VPrefs
any of several ways:

1. Click on the
Save
,
Use
, or
Cancel
button in the
VPrefs main window
,
2. Select the
Project/Quit
menu option, or
3. Send it a Control-C.

1.22 VPrefs Windows

VPrefs
uses a single main window, with other special-purpose windows
occasionally displayed as needed. The following sections describe these
windows and their contents.

VPrefs Main Window

VPrefs Server Window

1.23 VPrefs Main Window

The
VPrefs
main window contains several gadgets that let you determine
how

Ventriloquist
will work. This window contains these gadgets:

Server List

Client List

Client Authorization

Save Button

Use Button

Cancel Button

1.24 VPrefs Main Window: Server List

A server is another Amiga that you can control from your Amiga using

Ventriloquist

. The server list shows the servers you can control with your Amiga. Next to this list, there are Add, Edit, and Delete buttons. The Add button opens the

VPrefs server window

to let you add another Amiga to the list of servers. The Edit button opens the VPrefs server window to let you change the details about a server, and the Delete button lets you remove a server from the list. You must select a server in the server list before you can edit it or delete it.

For each server, the server name and the mouse movements and/or hot key that can be used to switch to that server are shown. The mouse movements are shown as a combination of L, R, U, and/or D, followed by a number. The letters represent Left, Right, Up, or Down, and the number represents the threshold used to determine how fast the mouse must be moving to switch from one Amiga to another. For example, L-0 means that you can switch to the server by moving the mouse off the left edge of the screen, as slowly as you wish. L-100 would mean that you can switch by jamming the mouse fairly fast against the left edge of the screen, but you could avoid switching by moving slower. You can switch back to the Amiga you're sitting at by moving the mouse in the opposite direction.

1.25 VPrefs Main Window: Client List

A client is another Amiga that can control your Amiga using

Ventriloquist

. The client list shows all clients you will allow to control your Amiga. Next to this list, there are Add and Delete buttons. The Add button opens a requester to let you choose another Amiga to add to the list of clients, and the Delete button removes a client from the list. You must click on a client in the list before you can delete it.

The client list is only used if

Client Authorization

is set

to Accept Listed Clients.

1.26 VPrefs Main Window: Client Authorization

Choose which other Amigas can control your Amiga using

Ventriloquist

. If you choose Accept All Clients, any other Amiga on the network will be able to control your Amiga. If you choose Accept Listed Clients, only those listed in the

Client list

will be able to control your Amiga. If you choose Don't Accept Any Clients, no other Amigas will be able to control yours.

1.27 VPrefs Main Window: Save Button

Implement and save all changes you have made and close the

VPrefs main window

. These changes will be used immediately

by

Ventriloquist

.

1.28 VPrefs Main Window: Use Button

Implement all changes you have made without saving them and close the

VPrefs main window

. These changes will be used

immediately by

Ventriloquist

. Rebooting the Amiga returns to the default or previously saved changes.

1.29 VPrefs Main Window: Cancel Button

Close the

VPrefs main window

without making any changes to the

way

Ventriloquist
operates. The settings in effect before you
ran
VPrefs
will remain in effect. This does the same thing as
the
Project/Quit
menu option.

1.30 VPrefs Server Window

The VPrefs server window contains several gadgets that show you \leftrightarrow
the
detailed setup for a specific server, either a new one being added or
an existing one being changed. This window contains these gadgets:

Server Name

Mouse Left, Right, Up, and Down

Threshold

Hot Key

Mouse Motion

Feedback

Use Button

Cancel Button

1.31 VPrefs Server Window: Server Name

The name of another Amiga you want to control from your Amiga.
This may be any Amiga on the Amiga Envoy network, but you must
also run

VPrefs
on the other Amiga to tell it to accept input
from your Amiga.

1.32 VPrefs Server Window: Mouse Left, Right, Up, and Down

Determine which direction, if any, you can move the mouse
pointer off the edge of the screen to switch control from
your Amiga to the other Amiga you named as the server.

1.33 VPrefs Server Window: Threshold

Determine how fast you need to move the mouse off the edge of the screen before

Ventriloquist will switch control to the other Amiga you named as the server. Think of this as the height of a speed bump at the edge of the screen. If you're moving too slow, you won't make it over the bump, but if you're moving faster, you'll switch control to the other machine.

1.34 VPrefs Server Window: Hot Key

Determine whether you can use a hot key to switch control between Amigas, and which key combination you can use. For more information about hot keys, see the section on commodities in your Workbench User's Guide.

1.35 VPrefs Server Window: Mouse Motion

Determine whether all mouse movements will be sent to the server (Smooth) or whether intermediate movements will be skipped over to allow the network to keep up (Fast).

1.36 VPrefs Server Window: Feedback

Determine what kind of feedback will let you know that keyboard and mouse input is being sent to another Amiga. The available choices are: Window (for a window to appear on the screen), Beep (for the Amiga losing input to beep), or None (no feedback). In all three cases, the Workbench screen title bar will show the Ventriloquist

copyright
information.

1.37 VPrefs Server Window: Use Button

Add the changes you've made in the VPrefs server window to the

server list
in the
VPrefs main window
, and close the

VPrefs server window.

1.38 VPrefs Server Window: Cancel Button

Close the
VPrefs server window
without making any changes
to the
server list
in the
VPrefs main window
.

1.39 VPrefs Menus

The
VPrefs main window
has these menu options:

Project

Open...
Save As...

About...

Quit
Edit
Reset To Defaults
Last Saved
Restore
Settings
Create Icons?

1.40 VPrefs Menus: Project/Open...

Load preferences from a file. A requester will appear to let you select a file name.

1.41 VPrefs Menus: Project/Save As...

Save the currently displayed preferences into a file. A requester will appear to let you select a file name.

1.42 VPrefs Menus: Project/About...

Open a requester that tells about Ventriloquist

.

1.43 VPrefs Menus: Project/Quit

Close the VPrefs main window without making any changes to the way Ventriloquist operates. The settings in effect before you ran VPrefs will remain in effect. This does the same thing as the Cancel button in the VPrefs main window.

1.44 VPrefs Menus: Edit/Reset To Defaults

Return to the default settings.

1.45 VPrefs Menus: Edit/Last Saved

Return to the last settings you saved.

1.46 VPrefs Menus: Edit/Restore

Return to the settings shown when you first ran VPrefs

.

1.47 VPrefs Menus: Settings/Create Icons?

Specify whether or not icons will be created along with preset files created using the Project/Save As... menu option.

1.48 VReboot Program

VReboot is a utility program that will add a Reboot menu option to the Workbench tools menu. This option, when selected, will reboot the Amiga VReboot is running on, after verifying that you really want to reboot by posting a requester.

If you're like me, you sometimes forget which machine you're actually typing on when you're using Ventriloquist, and you sometimes reboot the wrong one. If you get into the habit of using this program instead of just hitting the keyboard, you can avoid rebooting the wrong machine.

VReboot Installation

VReboot Startup

VReboot Termination

1.49 VReboot Installation

Install

VReboot

on each Amiga where you want to use it by copying it to your SYS:Utilities drawer, or to an alternate location of your own choice. You can copy it by dragging the icon with the mouse, or by typing this shell command:

```
Copy VReboot#? SYS:Utilities
```

Modify your system to run VReboot at startup time by adding this command to your S:user-startup file:

```
Run >NIL: VReboot
```

1.50 VReboot Startup

VReboot
can be started either from a shell or from Workbench.
It uses no command line options or Workbench tooltypes.

1.51 VReboot Termination

You can terminate
VReboot
two ways:

1. Send it a Control-C, or
2. Reboot the Amiga it's running on.

1.52 Credits

Inspiration:

Thanks to Doug Walker for writing NetKeys, which inspired me
to write

Ventriloquist
in the first place.

Testing:

Thanks to the people who tested Ventriloquist for me, especially
David Junod, who helped make the software much better than it
would otherwise have been by insisting on several more features
than I planned on putting in. Humph. If it wasn't for users,
it'd be ever so much easier to get software finished. :-)

Tools:

Thanks to the hordes of people who've supported Amiga software
development over the years with such excellent tools as AmigaDOS,
Workbench, Amiga Envoy, Commodities, AmigaGuide, TurboText, SAS/C,
WShell, ARexx, Enforcer, MungWall, and many others.

Trademarks:

Amiga, AmigaDOS, Workbench, AmigaGuide, and Amiga Envoy are
trademarks of Commodore-Amiga, Inc. TurboText is a trademark
of Oxxi, Inc. SAS/C is a trademark of SAS Institute, Inc. WShell
and ARexx are trademarks of Wishful Thinking Development Corp.

1.53 Release History

Ventriloquist 1.2 (30 Jan 96)

Added VReboot program.

Changed VPrefs to use "lcommand F10" instead of "left_amiga F10"

as the default hotkey. The old hotkey spec didn't work with 2.04.

Changed to new address for shareware registration. Took too long to get around to doing this!

Ventriloquist 1.1 (23 Apr 94)

Fixed a problem with the gadget layout code under AmigaDOS 2.1.

Ventriloquist 1.0 (23 Apr 94)

Initial public release.

Increased frequency of display for license reminder window.

New VPrefs icon.

Revised Ventriloquist.guide.

Changed "Client Security" to "Client Authorization".

Ventriloquist 0.9 (03/25/94)

VPrefs no longer calls ScreenToFront() when edit window opens.

Fixed Enforcer hits that occurred when server is receiving mouse events while there is no active screen (such as when Workbench screen temporarily closes when changing preferences).

Added Project/Load, Project/Save As, and Settings/Create Icons menu options to VPrefs. Added FROM, EDIT/S, USE/S, and SAVE/S command line options. Added ACTION tooltype, and added code to read in preset files when VPrefs is started from a project icon. VPrefs should now have features equivalent to the standard preferences programs from C=. If you notice any discrepancies, please let me know.

Ventriloquist 0.8 (02/17/94)

Switched to SAS/C 6.51.

Changed program name from DLBKeys to Ventriloquist.

Now uses IFF prefs file format. This is again incompatible with prefs files created by earlier versions. Since I'm now using IFF, future versions will be backward compatible. :-)

Combined client and server into a single program, Ventriloquist. Moved control window into a separate preferences program, VPrefs.

Now shows local host name in prefs window title bar, and in server edit window title bar.

Added client security to let you determine which client Amigas (if any) can control your Amiga using Ventriloquist.

Now prevents transmission of input events to another host when events are currently being received from the same host.

Now centers the pointer on the inactive host when switching from one host to another. This is so the mouse pointer will appear in

a predictable place when the inactive host's mouse is used.

Wrote an AmigaGuide document to replace the README file.

DLBKeys 0.7 (11/07/93)

Unsnapshotted the client's icon, and added an icon for the server.

After redirecting to a server Amiga, you can now get back to the client by any method configured for that server. The software used to require you to get back the same way you got there.

The server now blanks the mouse when focus moves back to the client Amiga. The pointer reappears the next time any input activity occurs on the server Amiga, no matter where it originated.

Added local host name to Add/Edit Host window, along with some other layout changes.

Increased number of characters shown for host names from 12 to 16.

Changed "no connect" message display time from 2 seconds to 1 second.

DLBKeys 0.6 (11/06/93)

Added prefs option to select window, beep, or no notification when redirection is in effect. Again, this makes the prefs file not compatible with the previous version.

Now uses more specific error message when a library cannot be opened.

DLBKeys 0.5 (11/04/93)

Changed layout of client's edit window.

Edit window now fills in a default hot key of "left_amiga F10" if "Use Hot Key" is checked, but no hot key has been supplied yet.

Added a "Select Host..." button to the edit window to use the Amiga Envoy host requester to get a host name.

Tightened up the client-server protocol a little. This again makes this version incompatible with the previous version. As before, don't mix versions on different Amigas.

Fixed an interaction with the Blanker commodity that caused the mouse pointer to appear in the wrong place on a remote host screen if the screen is blanked when redirection is started.

Fixed a bug in the control window code that was trashing a newgadget structure. This was causing endless Enforcer hits, but not on my primary development and testing Amiga. Sorry about that. :-)

Fixed an enforcer hit in the licensing code.

Fixed a problem in the prefs code that caused the client to ignore host entries without a hot key specification.

DLBKeys 0.4 (11/01/93)

Client now keeps a connection open even after redirection to a host is cancelled, in case it is needed again. This gets rid of the pause that used to occur each time redirection was triggered except for the initial connection.

Client now blanks the local mouse pointer while input is redirected to another Amiga.

Fast mode now works much faster and less jerky on a slow (cslip) network. It should be much better on a fast network too.

Client now brings up the edit requester when a host entry is double clicked.

Client now allows multiple ways to switch input to another host, where before you had to have a separate entry in the list for each switch method.

When switching from local to remote or remote to local Amiga, and the switch was made by moving the mouse, the pointer now shows up in the expected place on the destination screen.

WARNING: Because of these changes, this version is incompatible with the previous version for client-server communication, and preferences file format. Don't mix versions of the client and server programs on different Amigas.

DLBKeys 0.3 (10/26/93)

Client now has a control window.

Can now assign multiple hot keys for different remote hosts.

Added ability to redirect to another Amiga by moving off an edge of the sending Amiga's screen.

DLBKeys 0.2 (09/18/93)

Optimized the input event transmission code some to more efficiently use the available bandwidth.

The server couldn't run again after exiting because it incorrectly freed its server entity.

DLBKeys 0.1 (09/15/93)

Initial test release.

1.54 Problems and Suggestions

I have tried to make Ventriloquist as problem-free and easy to use ←
as possible. However, nobody's perfect, right? If you have problems using this software, or you have suggestions for improving it, or any other comments about it, please write me

directly.

If you would like to see features added to this software, please remember that it is

shareware

, and that I depend on users to pay shareware fees to help fund its continued development.
