

01214358-0

COLLABORATORS

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Chapter 1

01214358-0

1.1 No title

EZCRON v1.72
October 10, 1996

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Introduction

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System Requirments

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Running EZCron & EZCronGUI

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Buttons Reference

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Legal Stuff and Contacting the Author

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Troubleshooting

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1.2 Introduction

EZCron Introduction

This project was started mainly because I had a need to run lightwave between newscasts (I work for a television station) and do automated rendering whenever

I wasn't present.

The program has grown from a simple rexx script to a full fledged GUI oriented program that is easy to use, and doesn't require a knowledge of UN*X to make it work.

EZCron actually consists of two programs. The first is the EZCron Daemon (EZCron) which runs as a background process transparently to the user. It's very small and very fast. EZCron will sleep between every minute, only awaking to check if there are any events that need to be executed. Its CPU usage is minimal!

The second program, EZCronGUI is the user-interface, to EZCron. This program will allow you to control all aspects of EZCron such as starting and stopping EZCron, adding events, modifying events and deleting events. This program ONLY uses memory while it is running. After adding or editing of events, simply check the EZCron status window to make sure that EZCron is running, then quit the EZCronGUI program.

The EZCronGUI program relies heavily on the excellent VArex program by Andy Cook and is available on Aminet. Thanks Andy!

1.3 Requirments

SYSTEM REQUIRMENTS

EZCron should run on any Amiga with Workbench/Kickstart 2.04 or better with 512k of ram. This programs/libraris are required to make various parts of the EZCron programs work.

- REXXMast MUST be running
- AREXXPort.library by Andy Cook (included)
- REXXReqTools.library 37.71 or later (included)
- VAREXX by Andy Cook (included)

1.4 Getting up and running

Getting Up and Running

INSTALLATION

To run EZCron, you first need to install it. This can be done simply by double clicking the EZCron-Install icon. Or, if you're like me and want to install it manually, see

MANUAL~INSTALLATION

. The installation script will add a startup command to your s:user-startup sequence. It will also add an assign for EZCron. You must reboot for the assign to take effect.

After you reboot, The EZCron daemon should be running. There are two ways to check. The easiest is to simply double-click on the EZCron icon in the EZCron: directory, and look at the EZCron Status gadget. It will either say "EZCron is currently running", or "EZCron is not currently running."

The first window that pops up is the main control panel window. It is from this window that you can check the status of the EZCron Daemon, look at existing events, start and stop the EZCron Daemon, do a quick add of events (Although is it more 'graphical' to do it from the edit config window), and get to the Edit Events window.

1.5 Manual Installation

MANUAL INSTALLATION

- Create a directory called EZCron.
- Copy the EZCron program to your EZCron directory.
- Copy the EZCronGUI and EZCronGUI.info to your EZCron directory.
- Copy the contents of the libs directory to your libs: directory.
- Copy the contents of the s directory to your s: directory
(s: is located in sys:s and is assigned by the kickstart ROM).
- Copy rexxc/varexx and vxc to your sys:rexxc directory.

The following directories MUST be present in your EZCron directory.

- Copy the prefs directory to your EZCron directory.
- Copy the rexx directory to your EZCron directory.

The following MUST be added to your s:user-startup file:

```
;Added for EZCron
assign EZCron: [yourdevice]:EZCron
run >nil: rx >nil EZCron:EZCron Start
;End EZCron
```

That should do it. Just reboot and run EZCronGUI when you want to add, edit or remove events.

1.6 Buttons

LISTING OF BUTTONS AND FUNCTIONS

CONTROL PANEL

- O/I

This controls whether on or not the EZCron daemon is running. It simply toggles it on or off. Just remember to start it if events are due to take place.

- Edit

This button takes you to the events editor.

EVENTS EDITOR

- P

This button brings up the reqtools file requester for adding an event. Make sure a full path is given, or the program may not run! When a program is selected, the CURRENT time and date are filled in the time and date fields. You will need to change these to reflect the time and date you wish your program to run.

- R

This button brings up a string requester that allows you to enter a text string to be displayed at a given time and date. Once set, this will also automatically set the Event field to TEXTREMINDER. This must remain TEXTREMINDER in order for the program to understand its task. When TEXTREMINDER is selected, the CURRENT time and date are filled in the time and date fields. You will need to change these to reflect the time and date you wish your text reminder to be displayed.

- Start Hr./End Hr.

These gadgets represent a time range in hours you may want an event to execute. The Start Hrs. gadget holds the start hour and the bottom gadget holds the stop hour. ie. If you want your event to run from noon to 3pm you would enter 12 in the Start Hr. gadget and a 15 in the End Hr. gadget. Please note that events that run from PM to AM MUST be set up as two separate events. EZCron daeman works on a 24 hour clock internally. If, for example you wish your event(s) to run from 11pm to 3am you would have to set up your first event to run from 23 to 24 and then your second event to run from 00 to 03. I am VERY aware that there is not really a 24 in the 24 hour format, but it had to be done this way in order to work properly. In other words, Midnight has to ALWAYS be entered as 24 when used as an end time and 00 when used as a start time.

- H

There are three 'H' buttons on this screen. Both of them bring up a help screen for the available field inputs for either Time or Date strings.

- T

This button brings up a window containing a cycle gadget which allows you to select the time format you wish.

- D

This button brings up a window containing a cycle gadget which allows you to select the date format you wish.

- Help Mode

Turns on/off the online help mode. If active (checked), short help messages are given for each button you click. Note: With v1.70 there appears to be a small bug within this gadget. It works, but sometime to get out of help mode, you will have to click the gadget a few times. I will investigate this problem

at a later date.

- MkDef

When EZCronGUI makes a new s:cron.config file, it must always create one event within the new file (The EZCron daemon would simply exit if no events existed). EZCron will create a default event of your choice simply by clicking on an event in the listview window, or by creating an event, then clicking the MkDef button. You could set the default event to be dated sometime in the past so that the default event never actually runs. Note: If you do make the default event a past date, beware that the Purge button WILL delete it.

- A

There are four of these buttons. Each one brings up a ReqTools file requester for adding program file arguments. If the argument is NOT a file, you must type the argument in manually, first removing the hyphen character. Be sure to add the arguments in the correct order.

- S

This button brings up another ReqTools file requester for adding an optional sound effect to be played with a given event. Once again, make sure a full path is included here. The Sample Player Pref must have some sort of audio player set like playsound, Play16, etc.

- Event Select

This is a listing of all events. Click on the event you wish to edit or to view the event's fields.

- Add

This button allows you to add your new event. You must add all of your parameters FIRST then click the ADD button to add it to the list.

- Del

Deletes the selected event from the list.

- Modif

This will modify the selected event. First select the event you wish to modify. Make the necessary changes. Click the Modif button. You may also use the modify button to change the position of your events. Any event 'modified' goes to the bottom of the events list.

- Purge

This button will delete old, one time events. It will not delete any events that are still active. ie: events containing the fields Daily or Monthly-xx would not be deleted.

- New:

When clicking this button, EZCronGUI will create a new s:cron.config file with a 'dummy' event contained in it. There MUST be at least one event in the config file for the daemon to function (This default event can be set using the Add Def button). This event may be a date already passed if you don't wish to be bothered with an active event.

This button will copy the current config file to s:cron.config.old and create on in its place. If you happen to do this by accident, just delete

the newly created config file and rename the old one back to cron.config.

- TEdit

If you have a text editor selected with the prefs program, this will call your text editor and loads the s:cron.config file into it for manual editing of the cron.config file. FOR ADVANCED USERS ONLY!

- Test

This will test the selected event to make sure everything works just fine before you 'trust' it to work on its own.

- Prefs

This button takes you to the prefs window where you may set prefs for an audio player and for an optional text editor.

- Exit

This button exits back to the Control Panel window.

PREFS WINDOW

- Choose Text Editor

This will choose a text editor and saves its settings. For use with the TEdit button.

- Sample Player

For adding a sample player to the prefs file. This must be set if you wish to use sound effects with events.

1.7 Author

EZCron is emailware

EZCron is as free. If you like it and use it, I would like to hear from you. Or if you have any suggestions for improvements and new features, I like to hear them. Also, of course, if you find any bugs, I would like to know where they are. My EMail address is:

hines_j@wvlink.mpl.com

or

wdtv@wdtv.com

Also, If you are a Star Trek fan, check out the demo of Trek-The Guide. It is a full featured database with pics, sfx and synopsis for each episode with full cross references and misc facts.

It is available on Aminet.

Thanks must go to the following people:

Gene Heskett (For his huge help in figuring out some of these algorithms!!!
. . .and for beta testing)
Mike Herschede (Another Great Beta Tester)
Karl Swisher (Some pretty neato ideas)

Andy Cook (Author of VAREXX for which the GUI wouldn't have been possible)

LEGAL STUFF

- * EZCron & EZCronGUI ©1994-1996 Jim Hines
- * rexxregtools.library ©1992-1994 Rafael D'Halleweyn
- * regtools.library ©1992-1994 Nico Francois
- * VAREXX and RexxPort.library ©1995-96 Andy Cook (Where is v2.0 Andy?)

1.8 Troubleshooting

TROUBLESHOOTING

EZCRON WILL NOT RUN ON STARTUP:

Make sure that the line 'run >nil: rx >nil: ezcron:ezcron start' is in your s:user-startup sequence.

Make sure you have a valid s:cron.config file. It will not run without it!

EZCRONGUI WILL NOT RUN AT ALL:

Make sure all the libraries are installed in Libs:.

Make sure that sys:rexxc is in your path. I have found some systems that need to have rx in the c: directory instead of the rexxc dir also. Can't seem to figure out why. It's like the machine can't remember its paths.

Try running it from a shell. Just type 'rx ezcron:ezcrongui'

The Shell is actually the best method of trouble-shooting since any EZCronGUI errors will be reported to the shell it was ran from.

If run from WorkBench, all error messages are suppressed.

NOTE: EZCron daemon can also be started from a shell. Just cd to EZCron: then type rx EZCron Start.

If none of these solutions work, please contact me and describe the problem. My email address is hines_j@wvlink.mpl.com.

EZCRON (DAEMON) WILL NOT RUN AT ALL:

NOTE: EZCron daemon can also be started from a shell. Just cd to EZCron: then type rx EZCron Start.

Any errors should be reported to the shell it was started from.

Make sure you have AREXX installed and running.
