AStart

Wojciech Kocjan

COLLABORATORS

	TITLE : AStart		
ACTION	*NAME*	*DATE*	*SIGNATURE*
WRITTEN BY	Wojciech Kocjan	August 7, 2022	

REVISION HISTORY

NUMBER	DATE	DESCRIPTION	NAME

Contents

Chapter 1

AStart

1.1   AStart V4

AStart version 4.1

Last Update: 27.01.1998

© 1997-8 Wojciech Kocjan

Introduction What is AStart etc.

Usage How to use AStart

Configuring The prefs program and its options

Ideas behind AStart What I want(ed) to achieve

Technical info For a bit advanced users

Contact How can you contact me

Registering AStart It is mailware, but please register!

Bugs This program will format your HDDs etc.

Thanks to Here are the people I'd like to thank

MagicUserInterface The prefs program uses MUI!

Upgrading from V3 What has changed

1.2   Introduction

AStart is a packet mostly for users with small amount of RAM. It will automatically make your system load with more memory when SHIFT is pressed and will allow you to customize the things your system will and will not run upon loading with SHIFT pressed.

If you pressed the SHIFT upon loading this is called alternate mode and only in this mode you will be able to run system with more memory.

AStart consists of two parts:

· alternate-startup - the part responsible for starting up the system in alternate mode

· GoForIt - the part responsible for WBStartup drawer.

All of them can be configured via the prefs program.

Since version 4, AStart now also works just fine with the following programs:

· Directory Opus 5 - will run OpusBench instead of Workbench (via LoadDB command)

· MBench - will load MBench instead of Workbench,

WARNING!If you intend to use MBench, you have to delete the icons of WBStartup (Enabled) and (Disabled).

· HappyEnv - will use MountENV command to make ENV: use HappyEnv-Handler.

1.3   Usage

AStart was originally designed to be used by people with rather low end machines (a person with 64MB of RAM will probably not need to save about 2Megs - this is to you, rmk :). But AStart had a lot of modifications since the beginning, so thanks to a lot of configuration, it can be used also by high-end machines.

For the low enders, here's what you can expect:

· save some memory, but while the WB is still with the assigns

· possibility to assign ENV: to ENVArc: or use HappyENV

· assigning T: to SYS:T, mostly doing things that require T: assign (they say SAS/C works better with it)

For some high enders, here's how you can use it:

· easily switch between WBench (startup-sequence) and DOpus/MBench (alternate-startup)

· HappyENV enable/disable options - everyone loves HappyENV

· you can make a "clean" Workbench, for compatibility with other programs

Of course there are a lot of possibilities, which I haven't thought of, but are possible. If you think of something, let me know. I'm also open for suggestions.

A trick: If you'll hold down ALT when WBStartup is running (start holding it before loading workbench/diropus/mbench/whatever), GoForIt will act as if it was in alternate mode (even if the computer is in normal mode).

1.4   Configuring AStart

The AStart configuration program has been rewritten and has changed a lot from the previous versions.

Here is how the prefs program works. There are 3 pages:

· Alternate-Startup

· GoForIt

· Information

The first one is used to configure alternate-startup. The options are listed in the left list and the choices for this option in the right list. By double clicking on an option (left list), you switch it to another choice. By clicking on Save preferences, the alternate-startup will be changed with the new options. The options will be saved as well in S:AStart/ (directory had been made by the installer utility).

Under the list of options there is a list of commands to execute in alternate mode (option to run user-startup.alt must be turned on). These files will NOT be run in Workbench mode, but like simple commands. This was made so that commands which cannot be run in Workbench mode can still be run.

The GoForIt page is used to configure which files will and which will not be run on startup. Doubleclicking on an entry will toggle it's option (enabled/disabled). The enabled files will be run on startup, the disabled will not. The enabled files are stored in SYS:WBStartup/WBStartup (Enabled) and the disabled ones in SYS:WBStartup/WBStartup (Disabled).

Also there is a list for files to be run (without having to even put them in WBStartup drawer). It is very easy to use, because you can simply sort the entries by draging (dragsorting) them. Also you can setup which files should be run in which cases. For instance you can make MCP load in alternate mode and not in normal node (if you put MCP in user-startup).

The last page cannot be configured (well, it can by me :), it is just an information about the author and registering state. Most of the data here is stored in the library.

If you quit AStart configuration program, it will save all the parameters, so you don't have to worry about saving changes like it was in AStart V2 and V3.

From V4 you can also save your prefs or some of it so that you can load it later. To do so, select Save As from the AltStart menu and enter the name of the file. If you wish to save only parts of the configuration, you can select which options should be saved by clicking on the extreme left column of the options list. + means that this option should be saved. By default all options are set to be saved.

Of course if you choose to load a saved prefs file, only options saved in that file will be changed. The rest of the options will be unchanged.

1.5   The main ideas of AStart

Well, when I first thought of such a packet, I had an A1200 with just a HDD (1.2 GB :). So I was thinking about every byte of my memory, but I was nervous that most system patches also install themselves in user-startup, so executing it (to make all the assigns I needed to work on my computer) would also run MCP and every other tool I've installed. But then I realized it:

I could convert user-startup so it would still have the assigns, but not the patches anymore. And then it hit me: DOS patterns. I could easily check if the command was Assign or ie. MCP and put it or not put it in the dest file. And so came the first BETA of AStart V1.

After that I realized that my ENVArc: was growing bigger and bigger, so I changed the alternate-startup to assign ENV: to ENVArc: instead of copying it. That was V2.

Then I put some other options like not running IPrefs, AddDataTypes and ConClip, mount DOSDrivers, activate monitors etc. That was V3.

But then I got a suggestion (I think it was from Moszum, thanx) to save the options in alternate-startup , because people were annoyed by a lot of ASTART_#? files in ENVArc:. I added some more options, because it had new type of configuration. That is AStart V4.

I guess one could also call this page "History", he he.

1.6   Technical information

Well, most of the data for AStart is stored in S:AStart/ directory.

Here's what should be in there:

· alternate-startup - the "source" for alternate-startup, it is a text with special tags for options. The format is as follows:

1. /// VARIABLENAME 0 "Name of the option, up to 48 bytes"

2. // "Choice 0"

3. Echo "executed lines"

4. Echo "should be put here"

5. // "Choice 1"

6. Echo "and here"

7. // "Choice 2"

8. Echo "here too"

9. ////

The first line consists of the following things:

· BEGINNING OF AN OPTION - MUST BE "/// " (with space)

· VARIABLENAME - the name of the file (in S:AStart/) to store the option number

· DEFAULT OPTION - a single character which is the number of default option (like 0)

· "NAME OF THE OPTION" - name to be displayed in the options list , must be in commas

The second, fifth and seventh line is the beginning of the first choice:

· BEGINNING OF A CHOICE - MUST BE // " (with comma)

· CHOICENAME - name to be displayed in the choices list

The 3rd, 4th, 6th and 8th lines are normal script lines. In the compilation process, only the lines in the specified option will be saved.

WARNING! Only up to 8 options are allowed and there is no protection against it so watch it!

GoForIt gets its mode from S:AStart/WBSTARTUP file and is a combination of three bits:

· BIT0 (VALUE: 1) - run enabled folder in alternate mode

· BIT1 (VALUE: 2) - run disabled folder in alternate mode

· BIT2 (VALUE: 4) - run disabled folder in normal mode

Of course these bits can be ORed. The enabled folder will be run every time in normal mode.

The qualifier and when the machine should run in alternate mode is stored in s:alternate-startup.

The mode should be stored in the first 256 bytes as a comment and in the following format:

; $ALTSTARTUP: <option>

Where: <option> is the working mode for AStart. It is recognized by the first letter and there are the following possibilites:

· NEVER - never run AStart

· QUALIFIER - when the specified qualifier is pressed

· INVERSE QUALIFIER - when the specified qualifier is NOT pressed (nofmal mode only when qualifier is pressed)

· ALWAYS - always run in alternate mode

The qualifier should also be stored in the first 256 bytes as a comment and in the following format:

; $QUALIFIER: <value>

Where <value> is a combination of 8 bits which are:

· LEFT SHIFT (BIT: 0 ; VALUE: 1)

· RIGHT SHIFT (BIT: 1 ; VALUE: 2)

· CAPS LOCK (BIT: 2 ; VALUE: 4)

· CONTROL (BIT: 3 ; VALUE: 8)

· LEFT ALT (BIT: 4 ; VALUE: 16)

· RIGHT ALT (BIT: 5 ; VALUE: 32)

· LEFT AMIGA (BIT: 6 ; VALUE: 64)

· RIGHT AMIGA (BIT: 7 ; VALUE: 128)

The qualifier is considered to be pressed when at least one of the keys which bit is set is pressed. So if you set the value to 7 it is true if either of the shifts or caps lock is pressed, not all of them.

Additional files to be run on WBStartup are listed in the file SYS:WBStartup/.additionalfiles

This file is a simple text file where every line is an entry to be (or not to be, that is the question :) executed.

It's format is as follows:

YY|<pathtothefile>

||| |

||| + - the path to the file (can contain assigns, but should be complete)

||+------ a break character, doesn't mean anything (can be anything)

|+------- should this file be run in alternate mode ('Y' for yes, anything else means NO)

+-------- should this file be run in normal mode ('Y' for yes, anything else means NO)

WARNING! The 'y' also means no!

1.7   How to contact me?

My name is Wojtek Kocjan, I'm Polish.

You can see my WWW page at: http://priv.onet.pl/ka/wkocjan and see some info about this as well as my other projects there.

My e-mail is: kocjan@ka.onet.pl. It is the best way to contact me.

If you don't have access to the Internet, here are some other ways to contact me:

· telephone +48 601 47 32 37 (from Poland 0 601 47 32 37)

· SMS (if you have a GSM phone and can send/receive SMS): +48601473237

1.8   Registering AStart

AStart is mailware. It is not crippled or limited in any way and why should it?

But you are strongly recommended to register AStart. If you register, you'll receive a personalized library with registered to... in the legal status field.

I am also open for any suggestions, so write if you think of anything new.

1.9   Is your computer in danger?

No, it will not format harddrives (I hope).

But anyway, here's what I have discovered:

· MBench does not work correctly with GoForIt, the Enabled and Disabled folders' icons have to be deleted, because apparently MBench does not check if the object is a directory like the OS2.x (to delete them, click Here)

· The ENV->ENVArc option will probably erase your old options if you select the option Use and the program saves the config in ENV:

· the configuration program does not look very nice on 640x256 and topaz/8

· astart.library is not closed by the AStart command, because if its opencount will be 0 and the user will "flush" the memory, the data about astart and wbstartup mode would be erased, so it is not a bug, but is worth mentioning

· after installing every update, you'll have to save the prefs, because of the "compilation" process - may be fixed in the future versions.

Here's what I have discovered and got rid of:

· GoForIt used to need newfmt.library, which it didn't use anyway (thanx Moszum)

· WBStartup+ wasn't replaced by the installer, it is now

If you find any bugs, send an info about it to me .

1.10   The thanks goes to...

The people that have I'd like to thank:

· Jan Wnukowski - for support

· Adam Moszumanski - for the idea of using HappyENV

· Caveman - for his ideas concerning GoForIt

The ATO (Amiga Translators Organization ; WWW: http://ato.vapor.com/ato/) team that has created the catalog files:

Deutsch:

Sönke Tesch

Hrvatski:

Bruno Hofman   (hbruno@geocities.com)

Mladen Ili[1]inoviæ   (milisino@jagor.srce.hr)

Italiano:

Davide Romanini   (droman@dada.it)

Marco De Vitis   (marco.dvv@flashnet.it)

Russian:

Serge Veselov   (whitevoron@neworder.spb.ru)

Oleg Sergeev   (bigblack@neworder.spb.ru)

Srpski:

Andrija Antonijeviá

Ljubomir Jankoviá

Spanish:

Sergio Martín   (smartin@kaos.es)

Samuel Aguilera   (slyguy@mx2.redestb.es)

And here are the people whose programs AStart supports/uses:

· Martin Gierich - HappyENV

· Jonathan Potter & GPSoftware - Directory Opus 5

· Team NewIcons - NewIcons V4

· Mark Hewitt - MBench

· Stefan Stuntz - MUI, MagicWB

1.11   MagicUserInterface

This application uses

MUI - MagicUserInterface

(c) Copyright 1992-97 by Stefan Stuntz

MUI is a system to generate and maintain graphical user interfaces. With

the aid of a preferences program, the user of an application has the

ability to customize the outfit according to his personal taste.

MUI is distributed as shareware. To obtain a complete package containing

lots of examples and more information about registration please look for

a file called "muiXXusr.lha" (XX means the latest version number) on

your local bulletin boards or on public domain disks.

If you want to register directly, feel free to send

DM 30.- or US$ 20.-

to

Stefan Stuntz

Eduard-Spranger-Straße 7

80935 München

GERMANY

Support and online registration is available at

http://www.sasg.com/

1.12 Upgrading from version 3

A lot has been changed in version 4.

The entire prefs program has been changed and uses new path for storing configuration.

To erase your old configuration, click here . It will delete obsolete files in the ENVArc: folder.

Since in V4 the configuration is quite different, you'll have to reconfigure everything in alternate-startup preferences. The parameters of GoForIt will stay.

Some new features:

· additional files - files to run, but that are not in any of the WBStartup folders

· more options for alternate-startup

· alternate-startup is now "compiled" by the prefs program so it speeds up and saves even more memory

· qualifier that runs alternate-mode can be changed

· can run alternate-mode every time or when the qualifier is not pressed