A-START!

COLLABORATORS			
	TITLE : A-START!		
ACTION	*NAME*	*DATE*	*SIGNATURE*
WRITTEN BY		January 18, 2023	

REVISION HISTORY			
NUMBER	DATE	DESCRIPTION	NAME

Contents

Chapter 1

A-START!

1.1 A-START!

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          A-START! v0.87 (April 1996)    voidParrot Software 95/96
     Programming for you!


     New features
     For those, who have used A-Start before.


     Introduction
      What is A-Start?

     Requirements
      What do I need to use A-Start?

     Features
      What can it do for me?


     Installation
      How to install A-Start.

     Usage
      How to use A-Start.


     Preferences
      How to configure A-Start.


     Legal stuff!
      Crime does not pay!

     Register!
      Support shareware!

     Programmers!
      C,Asm,E,C++,Basic,Pascal,Delphi,Java!
```

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                   Future
                    What is yet to come.

                   Author
                    All about the author.
```

1.2   A few introductory words:

```
                   Introduction to A-Start (preview version):

  Before I start telling you about A-Start, I would like to remind
   you that this is only a preview version, with which you will only get a
   limited feel for what A-Start can do.  Many of A-Start's features are not
   present yet.
  A-Start is a multi-function utility.  It is a handy alternative to
   tool managers and program launchers, but that is not all.  Its GUI gives
   you an easy and intuitive way to control and keep track of some of the most
   important and often used functions of your system. For example editing your
   preferences or like launching your favorite programs are now just a few
   clicks away. You'll have fast access to your projects, whether it is
   programming, graphics, or sound:  two clicks, and you are in your
   programming-environment, paint program, or music editor editing your
   project.
  Using A-Start, you can browse through your partitions in no time, and do
   whatever you need to do with the files encountered.  A-Start recognizes
   the file types for you, and will start your preferred viewer or player.
   All with beautiful graphics and relaxing sound.  But wait, there's more!
  Delete, move, or rename files is a snap with A-Start!
```

1.3   System Requirements

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                   What you need in order to run A-Start:

   Kickstart 2.04:
       This version of Kickstart nowadays is standard, so get
       yourself OS3.1 if you are running an amiga under 2.04!

   MagicWB:
       To make A-Start look its best, you need MagicWB colors.
       MagicWB-colors are also beeing supported by AT:s new
       'Walker'-machine, and should be standard.

   Screen mode:
       It is recommended that you use a screen mode with a 1:1
       screen pixel aspect & a large page-size (min. 640*400).

   Hard disk:
```

A-Start is not very useful without a hard disk, and with
today's hardware prices, every Amiga user should have one!
HD's are to be thought of as standard equipment.

Font:
    You need the XHelvetica font, which comes with the Magic-
    WB package.

        WBStart-Handler
            :
    A-Start does not neccesarily need it, but without it you
    are not able to use some functions of A-Start

        Back to main

1.4   What can A-Start do for you?

                A-Start features:

 - Easy to use: pop-up windows and intuitive gadgets
 - Graphically pleasing look-and-feel
 - Easy control of your preferences
 - Easy access to your most used programs
 - Easy access to projects you are working on
 - Fast file-browser always within reach
 - Automatic recognition of file types

Please remember that this describes what the A-Start preview can do:
the full version will have many more features. Please see the
            future
                page for more information.

        Back to main

1.5   install

                How to install A-Start:

To install this software, double-click on the install icon and
the installer will guide you through the installation.

To enable running of A-Start on every BootUp after the initial
installation, copy the A-StartWBS program to your WBStartup
directory. Please make sure that the A-Start path is typed in
correctly in the only tooltype of A-StartWBS.info.

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1.6 usage

How to run A-Start:

Two programs are included in this package: the A-Start main pro-
gram, and the small A-StartWBS program. Because the main program
has to reside in its own directory with specific subdirectories
it cannot be placed directly in your sys:wbstartup/ directory.
If you want A-Start to start every time you boot your system,
you may put the A-StartWBS program into sys:wbstartup/. (it will
run A-Start from the directory specified in its only tooltype.
Make sure this tooltype is properly set to be the A-Start home
directory)

For example: APATH=dh1:utils/A-Start/

How to use the
                PREVIEW
                 version of A-Start

First of all you have to start the program by double-clicking on
its icon, or by running it from the CLI. A small button should
appear at the bottom left of your workbench screen (note that if
your workbench screen is not open, A-Start will open it). Click
on that button, and the main window pops up, presenting you with
seven different selections (selected by moving the cursor over it):

MyComputer
 Browse through your mounted drives.

UserProgs
 Start your most often used programs.

FileList
 Start your most important projects

Utilities
 Start a system utility program(n/a).

Preferences
 Quicklink to your preferences directory

Command
 Issue a CLI command

Reboot (quit)
 Quit A-Start/Reboot your Amiga (TM)

                    Back to main

1.7   mycomp

                MyComputer:

After pressing this button, a window pops up showing all your mounted
disk devices by name. Selecting one of the disk gadgets brings the
root directory of that disk to front.
 You may to your liking create hotlinks to directorys and display
them in this window. If you for example have a directory full of pictures
and often take a glance at them you may find it easier to create a
hotlink in order to get to that directory rather than to browse through
subdirectories after subdirectories. To create a hotlink just drag and
drop the corresponding ICON onto this window and the hotlink will be
created.

                    Back to usage

1.8   Define your most used programs

                UserProgs:

This gadget brings your progs-window to front. This is a window where
all your favorite programs reside. Drag the icon for the program you
wish to have fast access to, and drop it into this window: it will
be redrawn, now containing your program.

It is not possible to drop drives or directories into the window, but
in future versions it will be possible to organize your programs even
better, through "program independent" drawers: there will be an option
to put related programs into specific directories, created with the
A-StartPrefs program.

                    Back to usage

1.9   A button to launch your projects fast

                FileList:

This works like the UserProgs window, but in here you should only put
projects you are currently working on. A-Start will check the default
tool for the selected project, and load the default program. This
allows for a rapid return to editing your source code again, after

for example your last test run crashed your system.

                    Back to usage

1.10   This is not implemented yet!

                      Utilities:

In this version of A-Start, this window does nothing.

In a future version this is where you can place any program you
wish to have quick and easy access to.

Programmers: look at the
             programmers
              page.

                    Back to usage

1.11   prefs

                    Preferences:

This is a quicklink to sys:prefs/ for quick and easy (am I repeating
myself?) access to all the preferences programs of your Amiga(TM).

                    Back to usage

1.12   command

                    Command:

After depressing this button, a requester pops open where you may
enter a CLI command, and A-Start will execute it. This is like pres-
sing rCommand e on newer OS-versions.

                    Back to usage

1.13   reboot

Reboot:

You may shut down A-Start by clicking on this gadget and holding the
left mousebutton for one second pressed. After releasing, A-Start will
terminate.

To SoftBoot your machine simply double-click onto this gadget.

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1.14 programmers

As you may have noticed, there is a button named "Utilities"
on the main window of A-Start. It points to a directory in the
program dir called Utils. Currently, this drawer is empty and
when you press this button you get a "Directory not found" mes-
sage. This is where YOU can help:

The Utilities button was created to organize a number of system
tools to help the you communicate with the OS. The idea is to
predefine these tools and integrate them with A-Start, so they
are always present. These programs would help the user control
the Amiga OS and its most important functions. They would have
their own small id-icons, and would be provided and updated with
every new version of A-Start. The problem is that neither I, nor
any other member of voidParrot Software has the time to design
and code these programs... So I ask you to help us.

Programs like the following would most certainly be integrated
into A-start and published with it:

- Commodity exchange tool
- File finder
- Calculator
- ...

All these programs should be intuitive and graphically enhanced.
Interested programmers should email me, to receive a detailed
description of what to do. We can also provide programmers with
graphics, sound, music, and tips.

At the time there are programmers working on:

-Clock tool
-CPU info

How to contact
the author

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1.15 author

```
            Address:
    Tuomas Artman
    Päärynäpolku 3
    02710 Espoo
    Finland

 Email:   aartman@snakemail.hut.fi


 ****BEWARE!**** *   *
 Email-adress MAY change in near future. So if you cannot reach me,
 wait for the next release of A-Start!
 *************** *   *


 Feel free to send me comments, suggestions and/or psychedelic ideas.

 Acknowledgements:

Frederick Hacklin:
      (good ideas and support).

Stefan Stunz:
      (his fabulous MUI).

Eric Totel:
      (his excellent MuiBuilder).

Stefan Becker:
      (his WBStarter utility).

Brem:
      (software support).

The user, who mailed me a better version of the guide:
      (for fixing this guide. Sorry, don't
      know your name anymore :). Please mail me!)

Rickard Johansson:
      (for beeing the first one to register)

John Hughes:
      (for 'lending' me the prefs-icon in v0.5)

All of you who mailed me:
      (for convincing me that A-Start really is
      good:-) )



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1.16   This is a preview!

                         A-Start is currently being developed, and V1.0 will be ←
                            released in
    'near' future. To see how you can support me, and how to get me to
    release the next version more quickly, see the
                 Register
                  pa
ge.

1.17   The Prefs program

                    Preferences:

    To configure A-Start to your own liking, start the prefs program
    (located in your sys:prefs/ drawer after successful installation).
    The preference program requires
                 MUI 2.2+
                  .

    In the main prefs window you will see three different pages:

    Cache:

    Store file type in file comments:

     A-Start tries to save the file's type in its file comment, so
     the second time (even after rebooting) the filetype check will
     work much faster. For this, A-Start needs six bytes at the end
     of the comment string. If the file comment is so large that it
     covers the last six bytes, type caching is not done (because the
     last six characters of the comment could be destroyed). If you
     don't care if your file comments are clobbered, you can enable
     the option to always safe the file type in the file comment.

     This may improve type checking speed, depending on the size of
     your file comments.

    Use WBStarter whenever possible:

     When this checkmark is set, A-Start will check if your files
     have corresponding .info files, and if so, they are started with
     Stefan Beckers
                 WBStarter-handler
                  . Otherwise
     a normal CLI run command will be issued (with or without icons).

    FileWindow:

    Maximum Y-entries:

     Here you enter the maximum number of entries that will be shown
     in a file window. If the number of files exceeds this number,

"slide pointers" will appear on top and bottom of the window.

Y-Slides:

Here you enter the number of entries wich will be scrolled when
you depress one of the slide pointers.

Maximum X-size:

Here you define the maximum X-Size of the FileWindows. FileNames,
which exeed this length will be shortened and will be marked with
three dots at the end. ('...')

Viewers:

Here you enter the paths for viewers to show text files, IFF,
GIF, and JPEG pictures, and AmigaGuide files. The viewers must
support arguments.

Players:

Same as Viewers, except you define here the Music- and Sound-
players.

Misc:

Gadget-look:

Here you may define the look of the Gadgets out of three possi-
bilities.

No GFX:

When this checkmark is set, the mainwindow will be displayed
without the border-gfx. Some may like it better that way.

MainWindow-Placing:

With the popup-menu and the slider you can define the place of
the A-Start-window. Press the Test-button to see where the window
is beeing placed.

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1.18   Stefan Beckers WBStart-handler

                About WBStarter:

WBStart-handler is a handler copyrighted and written by Stefan Becker.

Short Description:

WBStart is a handler wich lets you run programs in "WB-mode"

from CLI. The program now thinks it has been started from the
workbench, by double-clicking on its icon.

A-Start does not NEED WBStart-handler, but without it you will not
be able to use the 'WBStarter' option in the prefs program, nor the
FileList-window. Most of you have it in your L: directory, but should
it be otherwise, please get the WBStarter package from Aminet.
A-Start does not use the WBStarter library, because it needs OS3.0 to
function.

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1.19   Magic User Interface

              About Magic User Interface:

MUI is shareware, copyrighted by Stefan Stunz. You do not have to
register MUI in order to use the A-Start preferences program,
but I really think you should, because of the superb quality
of the MUI system.

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1.20   Legalize it!

                 A-Start is (c) copyright Tuomas Artman/vPS (1995/96)
   All rights reserved

   1)
The programs are provided "as-is" and the author can not be made
responsible of ANY possible harm done by them.

   2)
The program may be freely distributed IF:

2.1)
   the whole and nothing but the whole ORIGINAL package is
   spread and absolutely no changes have been made to it.

2.2)
   only a small amount is charged to cover media expenses.

   3)
No changes of any kind may be made to the software, this guide
file, or to any other file in the package without the permission
of the author.

   4)
The program may be put on PD series or other kinds of software

collections without the permission of the author, but the author
would appreciate it if he could be informed of such inclusions
and if he would be sent the collection.

   5)
This program is, at this stage of development, considered to be
'FreeWare'.

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1.21 Register and support shareware

                    How to "register" and why?

   At this stage of development, this software is considered to be
   FreeWare. This means that anyone may use it without any restrictions.

   So why "register"?

   By registering you first of all give me feed-back that A-Start is
   a useful program, thus inspiring me to finish the 1.0 version more
   quickly. The 1.0 version of A-Start will be released as shareware.

   The fact is that I will continue developing A-Start no matter how
   many users register or send me comments. I think it is a useful
   piece of software, and that it should be developed further into new
   dimensions. And why not support a programmer who's software you use?
   I haven't slept for many weeks to give you the pleasure of using this
   program, now its you're time to do something for me ;).

   Why do I write "register" in quotation marks?

   At this stage you cannot 'register', due to the freeware status of the
   program. You can only support me. BUT: All users who support me
   at this stage will be treated as registered users of future A-Start
   releases.

   To "register": send US$15/20DM/60FMK, along with a letter, to:

   Tuomas Artman
   Päärynäpolku 3
   02710 Espoo
   Finland

*If you are using a keymap which cannot show special charachters then
*note that this -> ä <- is an 'a' with two dots on top of it.

If you have no possibility to get one of the currencies mentioned above
(US Dollars, German Marks, Finish marks) you may send me money of any
other currency (the value beeing equal,of course). But please try to
find a bank somwhere, will you?

The letter should contain the following information:

-<Full name
-<City
-<Country
-<Email address
-<(Platform)

If you do not have an email-address, you have to include your street address and zipcode.

You will receive your KeyCode when the 1.0 Version of A-Start is ready.

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1.22   What is to come?

                  Future versions of A-Start:

A-Start is right now going through serious development and many things WILL change and be included in future versions:

- It will be possible to enter "drawers" into the proglist and file-list-windows. This will give you another way to organize your files and projects (for example, put all gfx programs into a proglist/gfx directory, and all text editors into proglist/text).

- The command window is UGLY. This will change in future versions.

- Many more file-types will be supported. If you have a file type that you want included, please e-mail me!

- Not only a lot of neat graphics will be added, but also music and sound-effects. Of course with full ability to customize.

Please read the
            Register
             and the
            Programmers
             pages!

              Back to main

1.23   New features of A-Start

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early April 96 - A-Start v0.87 released
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New features and improvements:

   -I have decided not to send KeyFiles to the registered users, because
   many do not have e-mail. I have decided that A-Start will ask the user
   for their name and a specific code. All registered users will be send
   this code, so that they can use A-Start withoout any restrictions.

   -If you want to reboot you now have to double-click on the 'Reboot'-
   gadget. If you want to quit A-Start hold down the 'Reboot'-gadget for
   one second.

   -You have to change your prefs-settings concerning the programs to start
   when a specific file-type is beeing selected. Now you must enter
   something like this:

   Sys:Utils/Multiview {f}

   you may also add parameters for the programs as for example:

   C:ShowGif {f} -aga -fullscreen

   or

   C:ShowMeAJpeg -24Bit -SuperDuper {f}

   The '{f}' will be replaced by the complete path and name of the selected
   file. This must be present, because otherwise A-Start cannot know, where
   the name should be stated.

   -A-Start's stability has been increased very much. Many Enforcer-hits
   have been corrected.

   -The 'START-gadget' may now be placed wherever you like. An option
   has been added to enable the user to define, whether the main-window
   should be opend up- or downwards. It is noe also possible to make
   A-Start open its sub-menus from right to left instead of from left to
   right. All this can be set up in the prefs-editor.

   -By pressing the right mouse-button, when a filewindow with sliders is
   open A-Start will encrease the size of the window to fit the whole screen.

   -You now may add hotlinks to directories in the MyComputer-window
   Just drag a directory-icon onto this window to add the hotlink. A
   new entry then appears just like in the proglist and filelist-windows
   which enables you to open that drawer with only two clicks. You could
   for example drop your pics-drawer onto the MyComputer-window and so
   have fast access to your pics.

-Some minor improvements to the Prefs-editor.

-CPU-usage has been reduced dramatically.

-It is now possible to leave out the graphics of the main-window.

-Subdirectories in Proglist didn't make it to this version, sorry.
Neither did the recognition of other file-types. Send me comments
for/against A-Start using WhatIs.library!

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March 96 - A-Start v0.72 ready
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New features:

-A-StartWBS-program added to the package. With it you can start
A-Start on every bootup from your WBStartup-drawer.

-THE FILELIST-WINDOW IS NOW IN USE! Read the usage-section to find
out, how and why to use it...

-Possibility to choose the look of the gadget, appearing below the
mouse-pointer. Use A-Start prefs to configure it.

-A-StartPrefs rewritten. The v0.72 A-StartPrefs-program does NOT
support the v0.52 Env-file, but all newer versions of A-Start will
be backward-compatible.

-Possibility to define your prefs-drawer in case you do not put your
pref-files into 'Sys:Prefs/'.

-You may now choose if A-Start closes its windows after viewing a pic,
reading a text..., or if the windows should remain opened.

-Support for Mod and Med- MusicDataFiles and Sound-effects.

-Bugfixing. A-Start SHOULD work now better on 3.1 platforms.


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late February 96 - A-Start v0.52 hits the net.
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