

The Old New Thing

There's something about Rat Poker

19 Oct 2005 10:00 AM

56

When performing usability tests, one of the standard tasks we give people is to install a game, and the game we usually use is The Puzzle Collection. (Yes, it's an old game, but continually updating the game makes it less valid to compare results from one year to the next.)

One of the things that the game's Setup does that always confuses people is that it asks you where you want to install it and suggests a directory. If you accept the default, a warning box appears that reads, "The directory C:\Program Files\Microsoft Puzzle Collection does not exist. Do you wish to create it?"

People see this dialog box and panic.

Why?

Because it's an unexpected dialog, and unexpected dialogs create confusion and frustration. From a programming perspective, this is a stupid dialog, because **of course** the directory doesn't exist. You're installing a new program! From a usability point of view, this is a stupid dialog, because it makes users second-guess themselves. "Gosh, did I do something wrong? The computer is asking me if I'm sure. It only does that when I'm about to do something really stupid." They then click "No" (it's always safest to say No), which returns them to the dialog asking them to specify an installation directory, and they'll poke around trying to find a directory that won't generate an "error message". I've seen users install the Puzzle Collection into their Windows directory because that was the first directory they could think of that didn't generate the "error message".

Anyway, after the program is installed (one way or another), we tell them to relax and play a game. We say it as if we're giving them a reward for a job well done, but it's actually still part of the test. We want to see how easily users can find whatever it is they just installed.

One thing you can count on is that when faced with the collection of games available, for some reason, **they always pick Rat Poker**.

Always.

Each of us has our own pet theory why people always pick Rat Poker. Personally, I think it's that the Rat Poker icon is the most friendly-looking of the bunch. Many of them are abstract, or they depict scary creatures, but awww look at that cute rat with the big nose. He looks so cheerful!

Click. Another vote for Rat Poker.

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Comments

**David Harold**

19 Oct 2005 10:52 AM

#

I agree with your assessment that the icon is the deciding factor. The Rat Poker icon is the only one that seems "gamey" to me. From a quick glance (which is all I ever give an interface) it really stands out as much more fun than the other. Come to think of it, most of the others don't seem to stand out at all - they are too complex for me to grasp.



Andreas Magnusson

19 Oct 2005 11:31 AM

#

When you think about it, who is that dialog really for?

From your story one can assume it's not for the computer-inept to intermediate, as to them it's only scary.

And it's not for the power-users as for them it's just a nuisance to have to click "ok" on an extra dialog.

That dialog must surely just be someones brain-fart!

Ah, well, back to playing Rat Poker!



Steve Dispensa

19 Oct 2005 11:45 AM

#

We disable almost all of the prompts for things like choosing the directory of the software by default, and we have found that a) more people successfully install our software, and b) almost nobody complains. Not always appropriate, of course, but my take is that many installers ask way too many questions.

We talk about making our software usable by people that aren't comfortable with computers - it goes for installers too.



Ulric

19 Oct 2005 12:02 PM

#

Why have setups always that question about wanting to create the destination directory? It MUST have been part of the setup software's samples, because most engineers wouldn't bother with this. How far does it go back? Windows 3.1 MSDN-provided setups perhaps?



Mr. Analogy

19 Oct 2005 12:04 PM

#

We have two buttons at the start of the install:

Easy Install, Expert Install.

If they choose Easy, it doesn't ask them any more questions.

BTW, I think that's the real draw of Java programs: they install quietly from the web. (They still need to copy the program file to your web browser, but they do it QUIETLY without any INTERROGATIONWARE).

**Chris**

19 Oct 2005 12:20 PM

#

My biggest pet peeve with installers is the the default installation directory is always {PROGRAM FILES}\{COMPANY NAME}\{APPLICATION NAME AND VERSION}. Personally, I don't think of who makes the application or what version it is, but rather, what it is called. I know that this scheme helps prevent collisions, but there has to be a better way.

The same problem shows up in the Application Data directory.

**JD**

19 Oct 2005 12:29 PM

#

The prompt is a remnant from early Program Files days. Remember, many enthusiasts LIKED controlling where everything was on their hard disks, and the thought at the time was to have a prompt to confirm the location. Most people expected the program to in a folder off the root.

In retrospect it seems superfluous, and the design is questionable, but it was serving a constituency that existed at the time. Program Files was a new thing. I cut some slack for people just trying to support Windows at all, they made Microsoft a lot of money.

**I ♥ Win32**

19 Oct 2005 12:33 PM

#

An even better question, of course, is why there even should be an installer -- MacOS got along with .dmg's just fine.

The ASP.NET guys got the xcopy deployment mantra years ago, it's time the client teams (starting with Office) got with the program.

Mr. Analogy: about java apps installing from the Web, give ClickOnce a look.

**Scott Tringali**

19 Oct 2005 12:45 PM

#

Maybe it's something like this: "I know what poker is, but what is Rat poker?" So they click on it, just to find out.

I suspect the same thing would go for "Cheese (Gouda) Solitaire" (hmm, how does cheese affect solitaire?) or "Coed-Naked Checkers".

□

SuperBK

19 Oct 2005 12:49 PM

#

Had to go and install the trial edition just to see it. "Flinty Flush" and "Spring Weekend"? Those names don't convey what they might be about, Now "Rat Poker", sounds like fun, except it's not a bunch of rats playing cards.

Personally, I have never liked "program files". The space annoys me.

**James Schend**

19 Oct 2005 1:03 PM

#

Everyone loves rats and here's why:

Rats don't suffer from scurvy because they can create their own Vitamin-C from the trash they eat.

Rats are mostly cartilage, so they can squeeze their entire bodies through a hole barely large enough for their head alone.

Rats can't vomit. As a result, they've developed alternate defense mechanisms against poisons, like a sharp sense of smell.

Skaven, based on rats, is the coolest race in the original Warhammer game. Bam: <http://images.google.com/images?q=skaven&hl=en&btnG=Search+Images>

So now you know.

**Dan McCarty**

19 Oct 2005 1:12 PM

#

"(Yes, it's an old game, [...])"

"From a programming perspective, this is a stupid dialog, because of course the directory doesn't exist."

Like you said, it's an old game. And in olden days people used to care about where the Whoozymabob Installer threw its files.

Also, some people who still like to use the CLI (rather than clicking around) would rather not install everything to the uselessly verbose "Program Files" or equally silly "Documents and Settings."

Where would you rather go: "C:\Program Files\Microsoft Visual Studio" or "C:\Dev\VS"? What's easier to remember or get to: "C:\Documents and Settings\GreenUser\My Documents\Blue file.xls" or "C:\Files\Blue file.xls"?

It's too bad for those of us who like to get the most out of our computers that the lowest common denominator keeps getting lower. Oh well, at least we can still try to be fast at being slow.

Back on topic: My theory why people choose Rat Poker is because of their fear of rats and interest in poker. The name produces internal conflict and creates interest.

**Jack V.**

19 Oct 2005 1:13 PM

#

It seems to me a confusion of ideas somewhere along the line.

I have previously experienced confusion on whether "install in 'folder'" means to put the game directly in "folder" or in "folder/gamename". I always look at the default to check.

Obviously in the first case, that's a useful prompt. In the second case, it should check the start of the path (if you can establish where to go up to), thus avoiding the installing in "ganes/frogger" problem.

**matt**

19 Oct 2005 1:20 PM

#

I have to say that the whole Program Files and Documents and Settings thing was one of the biggest screw ups in Microsoft history!

Why not:

c:\Programs

c:\Data or c:\UserData or anything else that is sensible.

c:\System (instead of c:\Windows or c:\WINNT)

**DavidL**

19 Oct 2005 1:24 PM

#

A real mystery to me is why there isn't a single installer that asks the opposite question: "The directory blah\blah is not empty - are you sure you want to install there?" or something along those lines. I don't care if a new directory is created, but I do care if the program is about to overwrite something.

**pds**

19 Oct 2005 1:32 PM

#

The 'Are you SURE you want to make a new directory?' prompt hearkens all the way back to pre-Windows DOS days. I think this is just one of many Art Frahm-isms we put up with (see <http://www.oldmanmurray.com/longreviews/49.html> for details).

**DavidL**

19 Oct 2005 1:35 PM

#

matt: You think "C:\Program Files" and "C:\Documents and Settings" is bad? On Swedish Windows it's "C:\Program" and (drum roll) "C:\Documents and Settings". The latter isn't even my language. Oh, and after you have installed a few applications, you end up with a "C:\Program Files" directory as well, because the path was hard coded.

Drifting even more off topic: Why isn't there a per-user application directory, when there is a per-user registry, Desktop and Start Menu? Something like C:\Documents and

Settings\User\Program Files (or C:\Användare\David\Program if I had a say about the Swedish localization). So when I chose "Only for me" in the typical MSI installer, it would really mean that and work even if I was a limited user.



Scott

19 Oct 2005 1:46 PM

#

That Rat Poker product page is like something out of the Internet Archive. Especially the news in the top right... "XBox unveiled at 2001 CES", "Links 2001 in stores now." I would've expected a 404 redirecting back to /games.



Myron A. Semack

19 Oct 2005 2:30 PM

#

matt,

What do you find so offensive about C:\Program Files? I'm genuinely curious.

I always hear people complain about the "Program Files" directory, but I don't see what's so bad about it.



Michael Dunn

19 Oct 2005 2:33 PM

#

I would guess that the game names cause people to choose Rat Poker. The other names aren't indicative of what the game is. (Well, neither is Rat Poker, but you don't know that until you start it.) Color Collision? Finty Flush?



Ulric

19 Oct 2005 3:07 PM

#

Do not appologize of the 'Do you want to created this folder' message box by saying it allows to choose the location of where to install. It does not.

This message box happens AFTER you have decided where you wanted it, or use the default.

It's bad because it implies that the folder should have existed (which is what raymond essentially wrote), and also implies to us more advanced users that the program might install itself in yet another folder beneath that new folder. So it makes no one happy.



Puckdropper

19 Oct 2005 3:35 PM

#

I see I'm not the only one who hates the very lengthy directory structure of Windows. C:\windows makes sense, but c:\documents and settings\Username just makes things

hard.

What's also annoying is the plethora of the "My /object/" directories. When I try to get rid of them, they always get recreated. :-(

Rather than complain about "The directory c:\Program Files\MyObnoxiouslyEgotistical Program" does not exist, why not reword it? "The program you wish to install will be placed here: C:\Program Files\MyObnoxiouslyEgotistical Program. Is this ok?"



pds

19 Oct 2005 4:03 PM

#

C:\Program Files\ is obnoxious because it's 2005 and we STILL can't make all of our programs behave with directory names with spaces. In short:

C:\PROGRA~1\



J

19 Oct 2005 4:04 PM

#

Puckdropper: Why not follow up that dialog with another one that says "Are you REALLY sure?".



ac

19 Oct 2005 4:32 PM

#

Why can't programs come in component image files? When clicked, a loader would use a redirector to plug in the image transparently to the filesystem. No hour long installations, just instant play. You could drop those images to whatever path you like and they'd work. For customization there would be simply couple more images, like vs.i msdnlibrary.i sqlsrv.i - these could be also downloadable as a single file and a filesystem api would be used to split the bigimg.i to those 3 smaller .i's without any copying involved in the split process.

Why not?



Maurits [MSFT]

19 Oct 2005 4:44 PM

#

My beef with the name "Program Files" is that it could be shortened to "Programs". Of course there are *files* in there. It's a *folder*.



Grant

19 Oct 2005 4:58 PM

#

Please don't use c:\PROGRA~1\ for anything that's supposed to be general purpose. 8.3 name generation might be disabled on NTFS.

**David Walker**

19 Oct 2005 5:05 PM

#

Whoa! I *like* the dialog that allows you to change the folder. I almost always change the destination to remove the company name from the path. As others have said, when you look through "C:\Program Files" and see a bunch of company-name folders, you have to look one more level in each one to know what software is installed there. Some of us do look there from time to time.

Also, company names change, so when you have product X that's now owned by company C, it's installed in the directory for company D that used to own the product.

However, the "warning" that the (default or your newly selected) folder doesn't exist is not required at all. It shouldn't even be an informational dialog.

Maybe if you're installing into a previously existing folder, THEN perhaps you could make a case to notify the user that they are installing over a previous version or a previous install, and tell them the consequences (former settings will or will not be retained, etc.)

David Walker

**Jason**

19 Oct 2005 5:48 PM

#

OSX's drag-n-drop installation is the best idea.

(Although its actual implementation still leaves alot to be desired.)

The icon *should be* the application, there should be no distinction.

Of course this would require all programs to follow the best practices of where to store configuration...

□

Moz

19 Oct 2005 6:18 PM

#

I'm sure Raymond mentioned this before, but I always assumed that the reason for the space was so that people had to deal with/test for spaces in filenames. When they introduced the ability it broke a lot of programs, and some companies still haven't adjusted (hello Canon), but making the default and mandatory path have a space in it meant that everyone who wanted the wee "compliant" badge had to have tested that.

I'm one of the old crusties who wanted or demanded the ability to specify the directory, because I used to have my own structure. I have given up now because too many things break if you install them into d:\program files\tools\photo\<appname>.

Eiffel is especially bad for this - you must accept the default install dir (c:\eiffelstudio) as well as the default projects location (C:\projects) or else a lot of things just won't work. And this is a pedantic programming language!

**foxyshadis**

19 Oct 2005 7:51 PM

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David, others: We aren't talking about the change-the-folder options, it's generally agreed that's good to have. We're talking about the box that always pops up after you pick the folder (or don't) that says "WHOA pardner, are you SURE you want to install there?" It's worse than useless and one of installshield's enduring shames.

I doubt office could ever be single-image mounted, with all the COM objects it tosses around the system and all the software that depends on those. On the other hand, most software easily could without a hiccup, and that's a failing that any number of installer and systems dev companies (Microsoft isn't the only one that extends windows functionality) that had many chances over the last decade. Inertia won though, and the only way installers have changed is for uninstall to become a little more reliable.

It can be done today with daemon tools, but it's still a manual process and drive-letter dependant.



Carlos

19 Oct 2005 8:44 PM

#

Why is "C:\Program Files" so verbose?

I read somewhere that when Win95 was introduced, they wanted to choose a name that wouldn't clash with any existing directory, to avoid breaking upgrades from Win 3.1. Since long file names were new, it made sense to choose a long file name, because that couldn't clash with any existing folder.

"C:\Documents and Settings" is ridiculous though.



Cooney

19 Oct 2005 9:19 PM

#

> I doubt office could ever be single-image mounted, with all the COM objects it tosses around the system and all the software that depends on those.

Maybe they could ask the Mac Office guys how they do it.

□

msemack

19 Oct 2005 10:33 PM

#

I still don't understand the beef people have with "Program Files". As far as I can tell, it just seems to offend some people's sense of asthetic purity.

Do you just not like how long it is? Is it just "I want to call it something else"?

I don't see anything actually WRONG with the directory name. It isn't misleading. It doesn't routinely cause collisions.

Even if the name is long, what's so bad about that?

**Leons Petrazickis**

20 Oct 2005 12:23 AM

#

I'd like to add my ditto to the chorus of people who install to non-default locations. I install all games to Z:\games\ and all non-games to Z:\app\ where Z is a drive with sufficient space. I suspect that, as long as Windows exposes multiple hard drives, all installers of large programs will come with a Change Path option buried somewhere.

BTW, is Vista still keeping drive letters around? I think it is.:P

**Mika Hirvonen**

20 Oct 2005 2:38 AM

#

I'm one of those people that want to select where a particular program is installed. Most of my applications go to c:\Program Files\, but all of my games go to c:\pelit\ (pelit = games in finnish). Why?

Many games support user-created modifications, but the majority of the mods don't have any installers. So I need to unpack them manually. Navigating to c:\pelit\Some Game\ is faster than to c:\Program Files\Company Name\Some Game\, because my c:\Program Files\ has a lot of stuff already. Keeping the games separate from applications keeps both c:\pelit\ and c:\Program Files\ clean.

An although almost all installers allow me to select the installation folder, not many allow me to customize the Start Menu folder. I have to move my shortcuts manually to their "proper" location.

Another of my peeves is that too many games still write saved games, key configuration and other settings to the game directory. This makes it more burdensome to backup my settings and save games, because I have to track them down for each game. The only exceptions that I've encountered so far are Halo and the Max Payne series, who use the My Documents folder for all user-specific data. AFAIR, Max Payne even registers the saved game file type, so I can load a saved game simply by double-clicking it.

**Purplet [italy]**

20 Oct 2005 3:53 AM

#

Reasons why I dislike c:\program files :

- 1) It's different from language to language (there is no reason for that. c:\documents and settings is the same in every language, but italian Windows has c:\programmi. this leads to several problems). There is a bad history in internationalization of the wrong things like path names or keyboard shortcuts.
- 2) Having a space in it, it's a bit more difficult to use from the command line (requires the use of ").
- 3) The default convention of having the company name in the path, does not allow for quick finding an application directory.
- 4) This is more a problem of Documents and Settings than Program Files : C: is overbloated! Since ideally all personal data goes to documents and settings, I should be able to migrate it to another drive. This allows me to reinstall the system cleaning the C

drive without losing data, or simply to keep Documents and settings in a RAID 1. Once I was able to manually edit the registry (in the hack-a-random way) and successfully redirect Windows 2000 D&S folder.. I was never able to repeat that success however :(.

**Ratfink**

20 Oct 2005 3:58 AM

#

It's ironic really. They are going to add icons for whatever to your desktop, systray, startup items, take over your file associations, start dating your wife ...

But - "We have to create a new folder!!!"

gasp. Better ask the user about that one.

**Stephen Jones**

20 Oct 2005 5:51 AM

#

What do people have against 'Documents and Settings' apart from the heinous fault of describing exactly what's inside it.

Now the real thing that irritates me is that you are not asked when you install the OS where you wish the 'Documents and Settings' folder to be placed. Every install I have to go around fiddling with the registry to ensure that the default directory for both is on the D: (data) partition and not the C: (system and applications division).

I suspect the fact that MS used to penalize financially any OEM that partitioned the HD, as they were worried people might think of installing Linux on the spare partition had something to do with it, but now that the courts have kyboshed that dirty trick you'd think they would offer users the choice, particularly as they seem so keen on selling you ghosted images instead of OS disks, so that if you have to reinstall you wipe out all your data.

**Frank**

20 Oct 2005 6:55 AM

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I would like the 'Documents and Settings' more if it would contain only that. It would make making back-ups so much easier. In particular, I feel that the 'Temp' and 'Temporary Internet Files' are misplaced.

**Mak**

20 Oct 2005 7:41 AM

#

'Dokuments and Settings' can be different in other languages. In german Windows it's called 'Dokumente und Einstellungen'.

In theory many of the default directories names can be changed via the registry (e.g. with TweakUI), but not all programs/installers seem to use them correctly.

**Nick**

20 Oct 2005 10:17 AM

#

> Jack V:
> I have previously experienced confusion on whether
> "install in 'folder'" means to put the game
> directly in "folder" or in "folder/gamename".

I expect the program logic to deliberately be evil and install where I DON'T want to install. If I choose "c:\progra~1\company\app", I expect c:\progra~1\company\app\app
If I choose "c:\progra~1\company", I expect c:\progra~1\company

It's the same when there's an option for "startmenu shortcut", is that the menuitem StartMenu\Program\Company\App\App.lnk or a shortcut to the startmenu shortcut placed directly under the start button?

Another of this ones are when extracting zip files. If I unpack to folder c:\zipfilename\ the archive ofcourse already included an folder called "zipfilename", but if I don't specify any subfolder you can bet that the archive didn't include any extra folder, and all the files are extracted into a folder with thousands of other files.

**Nick**

20 Oct 2005 10:20 AM

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> DavidL:
> matt: You think "C:\Program Files" and "C:\Documents and Settings"
> is bad? On Swedish Windows it's "C:\Program" and (drum roll)
> "C:\Documents and Settings". The latter isn't even my language.

Another mystery is why on earth the recycle bin in english windows 2000 is called "RECYCLER" and on swedish windows 2000 is called "RECYCLED"? Why change from one english word to another in a swedish os? In winxp they are both called "RECYCLER" btw.

**Nick**

20 Oct 2005 10:24 AM

#

My favorite in bad ui design is Oracle install program. After it is done installing, you have to "abort" the install program and answer yes to a "are you really sure?"-question. If you instead click "continue", the install program starts over!

**Asa**

20 Oct 2005 10:39 AM

#

Ive used NTFS 5.0's junction feature (www.sysinternals.com junction tool) to move program files off of C: onto another drive, same with documents and settings, but i never had to change any registry paths or anything. My beef is that it puts them on *C*. admittedly i grew up in the dos/3.1/95 days when the OS crashed and thrashed, but the

separation of data and programs still is a ideal i cling to.

msemack

20 Oct 2005 12:35 PM

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It can be nice to keep your data on a separate drive/partition (from an organizational point of view).

However, splitting your programs the the OS is a silly thing to do these days. In the old days, it made sense because you could reformat the OS/boot partition without having to reinstall your programs.

These days however, if you need to reformat/reinstall Windows, you need to reinstall all of your applications anyway, because of missing registry keys, etc.

Also, there are a lot of programs that have problems if they aren't in their default install location (usually C:\Program Files). Their installer may let you put them somewhere else, but the application developer may have hard-coded a path into their code somewhere.

I've found that very few software companies ever test installing their application to a non-default location on the hard drive.



Michael J.

20 Oct 2005 2:12 PM

#

I would never choose Rat Poker. I would choose Lineup.

Asking a regular user for directory is stupid. Users don't care about directories. They don't care about disks either. They just want to set up thing *on a computer*.

Installation program should have been part of OS long ago, that what I expected from Win95. Just put a small script on floppy or CD and off you go. Instead people are creating installation programs of several megs. HOW an installation program can weigh more than 50K ?

All these stupid questions are there because MS have not created a clean and robust way to install applications and then to deinstall them as if they weren't there. I don't even mean drivers with their constant rebooting.



ray

20 Oct 2005 8:11 PM

#

It's easy to see when someone started using PCs - just look at how strongly they feel about short path names :)

For years I used to change the default install path for Windows to C:\WIN and customized my docs and settings to D:\DATA. After a while, I just stopped caring where apps get installed and now usually just let them go where they want to.

However, for the people complaining about CLI, just embrace the tab completion in WinXP (in Win2K you have to edit the registry to change path and filename completion to

use a tab or whatever - <http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;244407>).

The same for the explorer shell, turn on autocomplete (<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;217148>) in IE (why IE?) to tab through the selections.

I don't think you can blame Microsoft for all the badly written installers (apart from the bad installers for Microsoft products!) - it's the ISVs who don't care enough for the users of their apps who should be blamed. Especially the ones who still use 16-bit intallers for their new apps.

This brings us nicely to Windows Vista. It looks like the current betas now use C:\Users as the docs and settings replacement, but C:\Program Files still exists. Also, you can make the shell not display drive letters.

PatriotB

20 Oct 2005 9:29 PM

#

Michael J.: "All these stupid questions are there because MS have not created a clean and robust way to install applications and then to deinstall them as if they weren't there."

They have -- Windows Installer. It's been around for at least 5+ years now, and lots of programs use it. (None of my own progams do -- I use my own installer that I wrote.)



Troy Phillips

20 Oct 2005 10:10 PM

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DavidL, I agree that now the setup should only prompt if the folder already exists (like the standard save dialog). I also agree that there should be a per-user program files directory (plus a per user common files).

Chris, I think that it is good for the Application Data files to be categorised by Company - especially since the user doesn't have specify these folders (they are for the applications "internal use")

Dan, Just use tab for path completion and then you don't have to much extra typing for the long paths on the CLI. The only time I have path length problems is when it bumps up against the MAX_PATH - that is very lame and appears to occur on most (all?) of the other alternative OSs I have tried.

To the others, personally I think that the Mac naming of Applications, Users, System and Library are a touch nicer, but "Program Files" and "Documents and Settings" aren't really that bad! Certainly it would be nice to be able to specify them during the installation - at least for unattended installations (in NT4 days we used to do this at one of our clients, by just setting the appropriate registry key after the OS was installed - but that was when both were quite lightly used by the default os distribution (no integrated IE, MDAC etc)). Some programs lookup the current settings of the path, others have remember the full path that they were installed to (eg registry based COM registration)

foxyshadis, making office single-image mounted could be possible with the newer versions of the OS (XP/2003/Vista) that support registry-less COM registration (via a manifest file). Alternatively, they could do the same as the Mac Office which is to detect missing system components at first run and then install just that stuff.

Ray, Looks like you made half my comments redundant :)



Ulric

21 Oct 2005 3:09 PM

#

>My favorite in bad ui design is Oracle >install program. After it is done
> installing, you have to "abort" the install
> program and answer yes to a
> "are you really sure?"-question.
> If you instead click "continue", the install program starts over!

I've encountered this frequently on Mac OS 8, it's probably with a setup system. You have to abort at the end, it asks you if you want to 'install more application' or quit. Very bizzare. UI Optimized for which senario, I can only guess. So basically you abort the install rather than terminating gracefully.



Sam

22 Oct 2005 5:18 PM

#

Yeah, "Program Files" used to annoy me, but not so much anymore. I just got used to it... and yes, tab completion is your friend :)

I'm quite happy about Vista renaming "Documents and Settings" to "Users" and removing the "My" from "Computer" and "Documents".

My Computer and My Documents was just silly... and what the hell was My Network Places? My Network *places*? They're a *place* now?



John C. Kirk

24 Oct 2005 7:53 AM

#

From DavidL:

> Drifting even more off topic: Why isn't
> there a per-user application directory,
> when there is a per-user registry, Desktop
> and Start Menu?

I'm guessing that this is deliberate. If you're on your personal machine at home, then you presumably have access to the admin account, so it's not a major hassle to install software that way. If you're on a multi-user machine (e.g. at work), then the company may not want you to start running random applications that they haven't approved.

I haven't tried this out yet, but the SRP (Software Restriction Policy) in XP/2003 seems geared towards this - you basically say "People can only run applications from 'C:\Program Files' and 'C:\Windows', and only administrators can *put* applications into

those folders".



Adam Twardoch

24 Oct 2005 12:05 PM

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Please remember that your programs should never explicitly rely on folder names such as "Program Files", "Windows" or "Documents and Settings". On various Windows installations, these folders can have different names and different locations. E.g. in the German-language of Windows, "C:\Program Files" and "C:\Programme". Every now and then, I see faulty setup routines trying to write into a hard-coded "C:\Program Files" nonetheless, which is very annoying.

BTW, has anyone noticed that this MSDN blog software is extremely silly? After I have read a posting with a thread of comments, I need to scroll the page up all the way to click on the link "Post a comment", and *then* I have to scroll down all the way to actually write the comment in the field. Silly.

Adam



Neil

28 Oct 2005 7:49 AM

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Sure there are apps that confirm when installing into an existing folder. SpamPal does, for instance, and I think Mozilla does too.



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31 Jan 2006 4:08 PM

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