
LEGAL NOTES

PAC Compiler, Portable App Creator and Portable App Shortcut (from here: the package) are distributed with copyright: Maroesjk (2007, 2008, 2009).

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Some of the code (involving extracting icons) is based on work of Smashly. All the graphics (including the icons) distributed with the package are made by Maroesjk and Jwyanze. All credits for the ideas on the graphics go to Jwyanze.

RegShot is partly (re)distributed with the package, under terms of version 3 of the GNU General Public License.

THE STORY BEHIND PORTABLE APP CREATOR

The author found that he wanted to add some frequently used apps to a PortableApps drive. So he coded a small program, that monitored an installation for him in order to make a Portable App. That's Portable App Creator (sometimes abbreviated as PAC). The first version was written in one day using Autolt3 and RegShot. A lot of work has been done since, to make it useful for all people having a PortableApps drive and/or other portable device.

The scripts have been written, tested and compiled using Autolt 3.3.0.0, RegShot 1.8.2 and UPX 3.03. Other versions of Autolt, Regshot and/or UPX may work too...

The author uses a 32-bit, English version of Windows XP Professional SP3 updated with all packages available at Microsoft Update. The package has been developed to work on all 32-bit versions of Windows XP, whatever language the OS is. The package should be working on Windows 2000 as well. Portable App Creator uses RegShot as a helper program. According to the FAQ of RegShot, it will only work on Microsoft Vista if UAC is disabled and won't work on 64-bit systems.

In case you might want to change the source to make it work on your system: feel free to do so. All sources (Autolt au3-files) are included in the "source" folder.

HOW TO GET/COMPILE YOUR OWN PORTABLE APP CREATOR

After posting a first version of Portable App Creator, it was found to violate the forum-rules of PortableApps.com, since parts of Autolt3 were included. Therefore this version contains (next to this readme):

- *.au3-files, which are Autolt Script files (in the other\source folder)
- *.ico-files, which are icons (in the app\appinfo folder)
- appinfo.ini, with info on PAC (in the app\appinfo folder)
- regshot.exe and the GPL-license (in the app\appfiles folder)
- an executable, named "PAC Compiler.exe" in order to make your own "Portable App Creator.exe".

You will need some files of Autolt (<http://www.autoitscript.com/autoit3>) before the PAC Compiler can create/compile your own Portable App Creator. If PAC Compiler does not find the necessary Autolt files, it offers to download Autolt (approximately 6 MB) for you and extracts the necessary Autolt files from the downloaded package.

Just double-click PAC Compiler, follow the instructions and it'll make a new file, named "Portable App Creator.exe", for you. That newly created executable can be used as a stand-alone application: it won't need other any file(s) to run. The

author copied the single executable to "PA:\PortableApps\Portable App Creator\Portable App Creator.exe" to make it appear as "Portable App Creator" on the PortableApps menu.

HOW TO USE PORTABLE APP CREATOR

Portable App Creator should be run on a clean system, with no traces of the application you'd wish to make portable. This is important as (all) files added to the system and/or keys added to the registry have to be detected. If certain files and/or keys already exist on the system, the Portable App created may not work (correct).

Double-click Portable App Creator in order to start the program. Portable App Creator will automatically detect your PortableApps Drive and/or suggest a drive to use.

Choosing an installation package in the second screen of Portable App Creator will make it possible for PAC to monitor the installation of the package for you and create a shortcut to the installed software on the PortableApps menu. Choosing "skip" in the second screen will only create a shortcut. Just follow the instructions on the screen.

The speed of monitoring an installation depends on the speed of your system, the size of the registry and the number of files in some specific folders on the system. A clicked button displays "working..." while Portable App Creator is working on something. This may not be too clear because the clicked button is grayed-out (disabled) as well. Whenever Portable App Creator finishes its work, a new button will be enabled: just have some patience. The "take 1st shot", "take 2nd shot" and/or compressing the application using UPX may take a (few) minute(s) to complete. Each other step shouldn't take more than a few seconds without user-interaction.

A Portable App created with Portable App Creator will (temporarily) copy the necessary files in %systemroot%\system32, %userprofile%, %allusersprofile%, %commonprogramfiles% as well as the necessary information in the registry to the host-computer. All original settings of the host-computer (as far as related to the application) will be backed-up prior to running the Portable App and are being restored after the Portable App closes.

KNOWN LIMITATIONS RELATED TO PORTABLE APP CREATOR

Portable App Creator will not be able to create a Portable App if the application being installed really requires a restart of Windows. Please note that "really requires a restart" is used as a lot of installations will ask for a restart, but not really need it. An installation / application generally might need a restart if drivers or services are installed on your system. Just try and find out. Answer "no" if the installation asks you if Windows should be restarted and see if the application works.

Not all PortableApps created by Portable App Creator will run correctly if the user isn't an administrator and the Portable App normally requires files being copied to the system32-folder. However, it seems that a lot of PortableApps that normally do copy files to the system32-folder still work correctly even if the user isn't an administrator. If the user isn't an administrator while (normally) files would be copied to that folder a message will be shown to inform the user.

Portable App Creator will create a Portable App, that includes all files and/or registry-entries that were added when the application was installed and/or run the first time. Although it will detect any changes in those files and/or registry-entries it won't detect any new files and/or registry-entries it places on the host later. Main reason is that it's impossible to see which application (i.e. the Portable App or any other application) leads to the new files and/or registry-entries. For most applications this isn't a problem, but (per example) an unmodified version of Mozilla Firefox will save its history, cache and bookmarks to the host. So that won't work correctly!

In general, closed-source applications read/write in the hosts registry. All original settings of the host-computer settings (as far as related to the application) will be backed-up prior to running the Portable App and are being restored after the Portable App closes. However, since the information most probably includes the folder where the application was installed, you can't just move the application anywhere and expect it to work. The only thing the shortcut to the Portable App accounts for is the fact that the PA-drive may become another drive-letter on another host. This has less to do with PAC, but more to do with the way these applications themselves were programmed.

Also see: <http://portableapps.com/node/9909#comment-71004>

Furthermore, if you choose to compress the application (using UPX), please note that in rare occasions, applications don't like being compressed with UPX. In those rare occasions, the Portable App may not work correctly when it is UPX-ed. This has less to do with PAC, but more to do with the way these applications themselves were programmed.

PAC may not work correctly if the "actual app" is started using a "helper app" that closes before the actual app closes. The ini-file in the data-folder of the created Portable App will contain the line "file = helperapp.exe" by standard. If you (manually, this is not automated) add the line "filewait = actualapp.exe", PAC will wait for the "actual app" to close before restoring the original settings of the host-computer (as far as related to the application).

The author is aware of his limitations on writing English (in this file, all scripts and/or on the PortableApps forum) without any errors. As most native speakers of English aren't able to read, write and speak Dutch, he decided that writing all information in English is the best thing to do. The English may not be perfect, but he guesses it's far better than the Dutch of most people.

WHERE TO INSTALL AN APPLICATION

Let us assume you wish to install some application to your PA-drive using Portable App Creator. The original application is called "Hello World". You would like to see the entry to that application in the PortableApps menu as "Hello World Portable". As the entry in the PortableApps menu will be "Hello World Portable", Portable App Creator will create a folder called "PA:\PortableApps\Hello World Portable" to store information in.

Please note that the PortableApps menu will detect all executables located (directly) in the folder "PA:\PortableApps\Hello World Portable" and display it as entries in the PortableApps menu. To avoid ending up with multiple entries in the PortableApps menu, one should *not* install the application (directly) to "PA:\PortableApps\Hello World Portable". Portable App Creator will create (only) one executable called "PA:\PortableApps\Hello World Portable\Hello World Portable.exe" to be displayed as an entry in the Portable Apps Menu.

Now, it's clear that you should not install the application (directly) to "PA:\PortableApps\Hello World Portable". However, installing to "PA:\PortableApps\Hello World Portable\Subfolder" is no problem, as the PortableApps menu only "digs" one folder deep.

Personally, the author would install the application to "PA:\PortableApps\Hello World Portable\App", but you could also install to (p.e.) "PA:\Program Files\Hello World" or "PA:\Any New Folder".

HISTORY

date	version	changelog
01-11-2007	alpha 1	- First version. Violated the forum-rules of PortableApps.com, since a few files of Autolt were included.
02-11-2007	alpha 2	- Created new icon(s). - Removed RegShot & Autolt files, and slightly changed Portable App Creator because of that. - Created PAC Compiler.
05-11-2007	alpha 3	- Added RegShot 1.8.2 and GPL-license. - Added (more) comments to the script files, which will make the scripts easier for people to understand <i>and</i> edit. - Changed PAC Compiler to detect an existing installation of Autolt3. - Changed Portable App Creator in order to make it work on non-English operating systems. - Some (other) small changes (optimizations on speed and/or behavior).
06-11-2007	alpha 4	- Added 7za 4.42 and added version 3 of both the GPL- and LGPL-license. - Changed PAC Compiler to automatically download Autolt-v3.zip if needed. - Changed all references to an U3-drive into a PortableApps-drive. - Some (other) small changes (optimizations on speed and/or behavior).
14-11-2007	alpha 5	- Created a GUI for Portable App Creator. - Changed PAC Compiler to only download Autolt-v3.zip if the necessary Auto-It files are not found in an Autolt-installation; and

date	version	changelog
		- are not found on any harddisk.
14-11-2007	alpha 6	- Repaired PAC Compiler, which contained two errors.
15-11-2007	alpha 7	- Added the functionality to monitor the installation of MSI-files. - Created a GUI for PAC Compiler.
23-11-2007	0-90 beta	- Changed the icon(s) and picture of the programs / GUI (thanks to Jwyanze). - Retested the whole program doing a few installations on a few systems and crushed a few bugs. - Some (other) small changes (optimizations on speed and/or behavior).
27-11-2007	0-91 beta	- Changed the way Portable App Creator interacts with RegShot and the RegShot results-file. - Excluded "start menu", "desktop" and/or "recent" folders/files as well as "RecentDocs" and/or "MUICache" RegKeys from being processed by Portable App Creator. - Removed the unnecessary feature / bug of some backup-files being copied to the PortableApps drive in Portable App Shortcut. This improved the speed of (most) PortableApps being opened/close (in some extreme cases up to two times faster!). - Some (other) small changes (optimizations on speed and/or behavior).
03-12-2007	0-92 beta	- PAC Compiler downloads the new self-extracting RAR instead of a ZIP from the Autolt website if needed now. - Removed 7-Zip from the package as it is no longer needed by PAC Compiler. - Changed the requirement for administrative rights in PAC Compiler (requirement removed) and Portable App Shortcut (require for Vista only). - Combined (the) four functions that monitored the installation in Portable App Creator. - Excluded the "Temporary Internet Files" folder as well as "OpenSaveMRU" RegKeys from being processed by Portable App Creator. - Added a screen in Portable Apps Creator if the users attempts to monitor an installation on Windows Vista with UAC enabled. As RegShot won't work while UAC is enabled, PAC exits after displaying info on this. - Added a screen in Portable Apps Creator to show while executing the final steps of PAC. - Some (other) small changes (optimizations on speed and/or behavior).
12-12-2007	0-93 beta	- Generalized the way Portable App Creator works with the array of environment-variable folders. I thought about adding %windir% and the documents folder to the array, but decided not to. It would decrease the speed of PAC big time and shouldn't be necessary for well programmed software, according to me. - Changed Portable App Creator and Portable App Shortcut to be able to work with REG_MULTI_SZ RegKeys that contain a linefeed (@lf) character. - Changed all scripts to only allow one instance, since I noticed that more than one instance to the Portable App may lead to erroneous behavior. - Added a few lines to make sure the Portable App will also work if the registry points to the PortableApps drive between double quotes (e.g. "). - Replaced the double quotes around strings with single quotes in all scripts. - Some (other) small changes (optimizations on behavior).
12-12-2007	0-93.1 beta	- Eliminated a small glitch / error in Portable App Shortcut. - Changed the routine to replace (the string referring to) the PortableApps drive and linefeed-character in a Registry Value. - Changed the the "Convert Files" button to "Process Shots" in Portable App Creator and moved the comparison of the shots to there (used to be under the "Take 2nd Shot" button). - Changed the routine to detect unnecessary RegKeys and folders. - Added "StreamMRU", "MenuOrder" and "ShellNoRoam" to the array of unnecessary RegKeys.
10-01-2008	0-94 beta	- Changed the routine to detect environment-variable folders in the RegShot results-file. - Added text to the "ShortCut Information"-screen in Portable App Creator to remind the user to install any service pack, patch, hotfix, update and/or add-on before continuing. - Detected (and repaired) a small error in the message displayed when Portable App Creator runs using Vista with UAC disabled. - Changed the way Portable App Creator interacts with RegShot (getting the title of RegShot and clearing old RegShot data). Now changes the priority for RegShot to 'low'. - Added "Installer", "Uninstall" and "Cache" to the array of unnecessary RegKeys. - Some behavioral changes in the routines of PAC Compiler.
08-02-2008	0-95 beta	- Created a workaround in Portable App Creator for ancient 16-bit installers. - Changed the way some variables were declared. This might solve the 'Variable used without being declared'-errors which were mentioned by some people.

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		- Some small visual and behavioral changes in all scripts.
08-02-2008	0-95.1 beta	- Changed the routine to unpack the self-extracting RAR from the Autolt website.
13-02-2008	0-95.2 beta	- Changed the routine to unpack the self-extracting RAR from the Autolt website. - Removed the administrative requirement (meant for Vista only) in Portable App Shortcut: it erroneously was used for all Windows versions. Introduced a new check to see if the Portable App uses the system32-folder while the user doesn't have administrative rights.
16-02-2008	0-95.3 beta	- Eliminated a small glitch / error in PAC Compiler.
25-02-2008	0-96 beta	- Changed Portable App Creator and Portable App Shortcut to work correctly, even if being executed from the/a drive where Windows is installed on. - Changed Portable App Shortcut to assume the PA-drive is the drive it's been launched from if it doesn't find the right PortableApps folder. - Changed the way HKU-RegKeys are transformed into HKCU-RegKeys. - Added "UserAssist" and "Discardable" to the array of unnecessary RegKeys. - Some behavioral change in the routine of PAC Compiler where it gets the version for/of Portable App Creator.
28-02-2008	0-96.1 beta	- Changed Portable App Creator to close the RegShot results-file, even if the user hides the extensions of known filetypes.
29-02-2008	0-96.2 beta	- Fixed a small glitch in Portable App Shortcut when building the location of the PortableApp.
14-03-2008	0-96.3 beta	- Eliminated a glitch in PAC Compiler. - Added an option in Portable App Creator to compress the application (being) installed using UPX. - As RegShot is not compatible with 64-bit operating systems, PAC exits after displaying info on this if the users attempts to monitor an installation on a 64-bit OS. - Changed Portable App Shortcut to assume the PA-drive is the drive it's been launched from. - Some small visual and behavioral changes in all scripts.
18-03-2008	0-96.4 beta	- Created a workaround in Portable App Creator in case a warning on downloaded software is showed.
19-08-2008	0-97 beta	- Behavioral changes in the routines of PAC Compiler, because of functional changes in the last Autolt version(s). - Changed Portable App Creator and Portable App Shortcut to work for all portable devices, not requiring the PortableAppsMenu anymore. Because of that, Portable App Creator now always assume that it is running from the portable drive you'll install an application to. However, this is easily changed on the welcome-screen. - Portable App Creator now will always show a window to browse for files, instead of having it typed. - Portable App Creator now will detect the icon of the application (being) installed and suggests to use the same icon for the launcher. If the application (being) installed is ancient 16-bit software, the icon of PAC will be used. - Changed the scripts, icons and folder structure to get it more or less in line with the PortableApps.Com Format Spec Outline (draft 2).
01-01-2009	0-97.1 beta	- Minor visual and behavioral changes in Portable App Creator. - Excluded all "temp" folders from being processed by Portable App Creator. - Portable App Shortcut now creates the folder structures if necessary.
06-01-2009	0-97.2 beta	- Improved routine to delete folder structures created by Portable App Shortcut. - Created the "FileWait" routine (possible manual addition to the ini-file), in order to make Portable App Shortcut wait for an extra process to close (also see the "Known Limitations Related To Portable App Creator"-section).

FURTHER PLANS

A website for PAC could be nice. For now, the author doesn't have enough spare time to develop a website, so PAC is sticking with the PortableApps.com forums. However, if anyone does have time and is willing to create a website for PAC (including a forum), that would be great.

Any volunteers can send an e-mail to [Portable App Creator @ gmail.com](mailto:PortableAppCreator@gmail.com) (remove the spaces and underscores). Volunteers (if any) will be mentioned in future versions!

SPONSORING

Companies are free to sponsor me and/or PAC with money and/or products. If the author would have / could use Microsoft Vista and/or a 64-bit system, he would try to make PAC (more) compatible with those systems. But scripting and testing is hard if you don't have a proper system to test on. So, the author is really eager to get a sponsored (64-bit) computer and/or Microsoft Vista (Ultimate).

Any sponsors can send an e-mail to [Portable App Creator @ gmail.com](mailto:PortableAppCreator@gmail.com) (remove the spaces and underscores). Sponsors (if any) will be mentioned in future versions!

REGSHOT

RegShot isn't compatible with 64-bit systems and reportedly only works with Microsoft Vista if UAC is disabled.

You can get RegShot at <http://sourceforge.net/projects/regshot>.

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