

Really Simple Menu

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Description

This really simple menu system is intended for situations where you want to create a really simple system for computer illiterate users to access some applications or documents. For example, a public kiosk. The buttons are big enough to use on a touch screen. The minimal display consists of a header area with title, sub-title and logo and the main area containing buttons with icons and captions. The menu can't be accidentally closed, dragged, resized or hidden. Buttons are created by making Windows shortcuts. Customise the button caption, icon and target by editing the shortcut.

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Technical Support

No guarantees whatsoever are implied that technical support will be provided or that technical support, when provided, will be accurate. This software is basically unsupported and supplied on an as-is basis.

However there is a growing community at: www.glenn.delahoy.com/really-simple-menu.

32 Bit Application

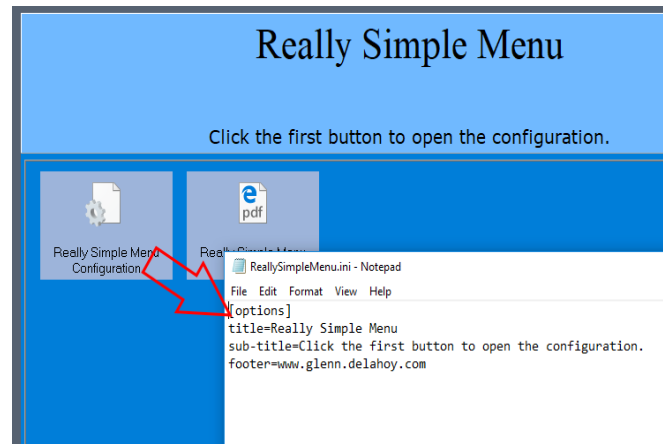
This program is a 32 bit Windows application. It should run fine in any 64 bit environment. There will not be a native 64 bit version any time in the foreseeable future.

Quick Start

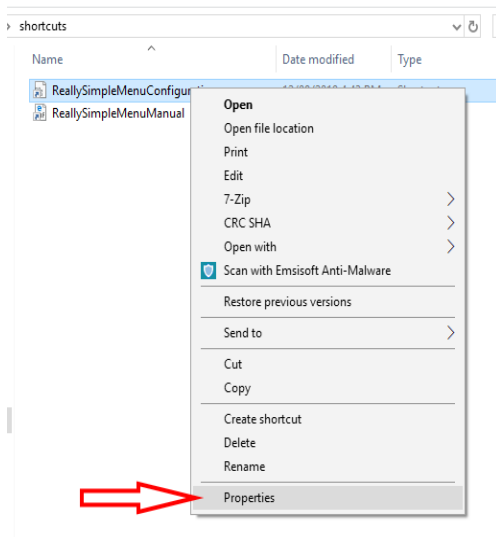
The first time Really Simple Menu is run it will create a basic configuration file and the *shortcuts* sub-folder. Two buttons will appear on the menu representing the configuration file and the manual.

Click the first button to open the configuration file and modify the title and sub-title text to your requirements and save the file.

Next, navigate to the *shortcuts* folder. You'll see the two shortcuts for the two buttons. Here you create standard Windows shortcuts for the applications and/or documents you want to appear on the menu.



Click the first button to open the configuration file.



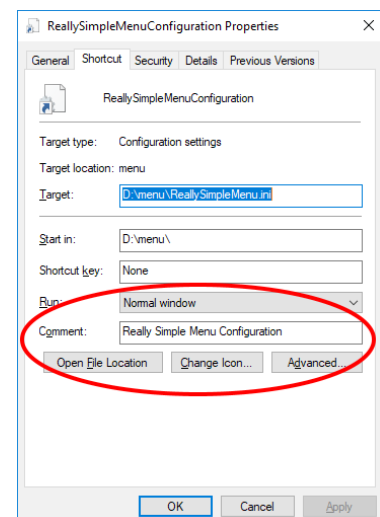
Right click the shortcut and select Properties.

To adjust the button caption, edit the shortcut in question and modify the *Comment* field. To delete a button just delete the shortcut in question.

You can leave the menu running and watch it update itself as you add and edit the shortcuts and configuration.

You can make as many shortcuts as you want in this folder.

To close the menu, right click anywhere on the menu background and select Quit.



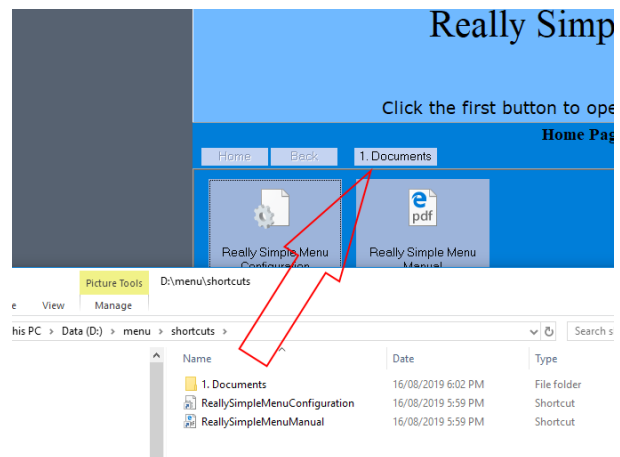
The comment field is used as the button caption.

Additional Pages

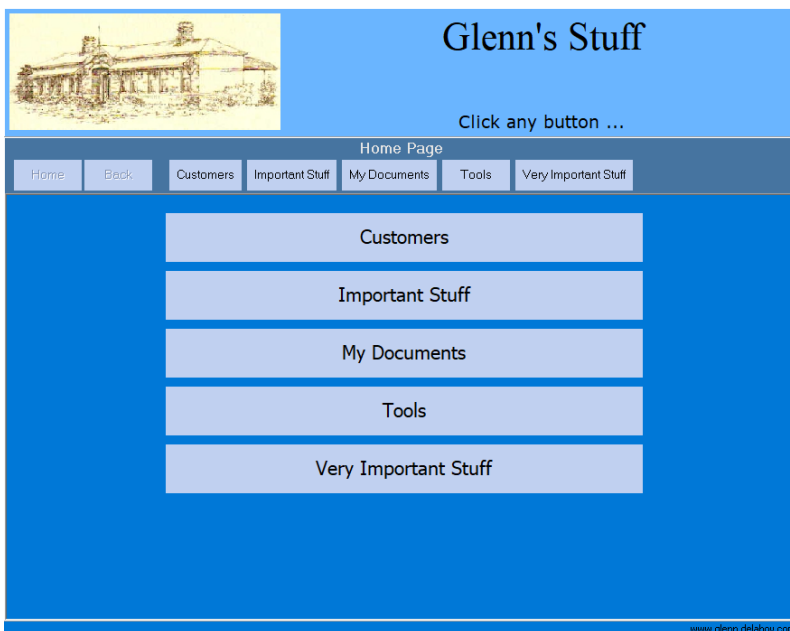
To create additional pages on the menu, create sub-folders in the *shortcuts* folder. The name of each of these sub-folders will appear as the name of a page on the menu. Create shortcuts within these sub-folders for items on the pages.

You can create as many pages as you want simply by adding more sub-folders in the *shortcuts* folder. If there are too many pages to display on the screen at once, a scroll button will appear on the right hand side.

You can make pages within pages by creating folders within the folders. In other words a tree hierarchy that mimics the file system so you can drill down into categories and collections. The menu will update the navigation bar to reflect your position in the hierarchy and there are also Home and Back buttons.



The shortcuts folder contains shortcuts for the Main Page and any sub-folders contain shortcuts for additional pages.



You can create a Contents style display by having no shortcuts in the *Shortcuts* folder itself but only sub-folders. This is true for a folder at any level.

User Mode

In User Mode, (that is, not Admin Mode), there are a few tools available to the user. All are listed on the right click context menu, some also have hotkeys. Nearly all can be enabled or disabled in the configuration ini file.

Context Menu

Access this context menu by right clicking anywhere on the menu.

Find	Find any page, page-header or shortcut/button containing the given text. Search starts from the page following the current page so if you want to search all, go to the home page.
Redisplay	This re-displays all buttons in case of some glitch. You normally won't need this.
Button Size	Make the shortcut buttons bigger or smaller depending on requirements. See the discussion later.
Slideshow	Display a full screen slideshow of images found on the current page.
About	It's all about me! Donations are welcome! Press any key.
Quit	Close the menu.

Slideshow

The right click context menu has an option to show a full screen slideshow (or press F10). The slideshow consists of images found on the current page. Just navigate to the page containing the images you want and press F10. Press any key to exit the slideshow. The slideshow option is controlled in the ini file with the *slideshow-visible* and *slideshow-time* options.

Internal Image File Viewer

The built-in image file viewer helps to keep things fast and simple for the end user. When the user clicks on an image button, the image is displayed full-screen with a few buttons on a toolbar underneath. Press the *Previous Image* and *Next Image* buttons to see other images on the page, press the *Return To Menu* button to close the image and return to the menu. If enabled, there is an additional button to view the image in the system defined photo viewer. There are no other tools, on purpose. Supported image files are: jpg, jpeg, png, gif, tif, tiff, bmp. Any other formats will be opened in the application associated with the file extension.

Admin Mode

Admin mode provides some useful additional tools during setup. To access *admin mode*, run the menu with the `/admin` command line argument. Create a batch file containing:

```
start ReallySimpleMenu.exe /admin
```

You can also make a Windows shortcut to the application then modify it to add the command line option.

Once in *admin* mode, right click anywhere on the menu display background. This will bring up the enhanced context menu. Use this while constructing your menu contents. Run it in normal mode for end user consumption.

The mouse-over hover hints will show the full path of the shortcut or folder.

Admin Options

In addition to the context menu items available in user mode, there are special options only available in Admin Mode.

Reload	Full configuration and shortcuts reload. Shouldn't be needed as it reloads automatically whenever there's a change.
Edit Config	Open the configuration file in your text editor. When you save the file, the menu automatically reloads.
New Page	Create a new page in the current page which equates to creating a sub-folder in the current folder.
Create Shortcuts	A tool to help you create a lot of shortcuts at once in the current page by scanning a directory tree. See next section.
Explore Shortcuts	Open File Explorer at the shortcuts folder.

Admin Shortcut Button Menu

There is a context menu available if you right click on a shortcut button.

Properties	Open the properties editor for the shortcut associated with this button.
Delete	Delete the shortcut and hence the shortcut button.

Admin Folder Button Menu

There is a context menu available if you right click on a folder button.

Open Folder	Open a File Explorer at the shortcut folder associated with this folder button.
Delete	Delete the shortcut folder and hence the folder button. The folder must be empty.

Bulk Creation of Shortcuts/Buttons

If you have a lot of documents that you want to add to Really Simple Menu, you can use the Create Shortcuts tool. You need to be in Admin mode.

The idea is you point this tool to the folder that contains your documents and it will traverse the folder and, optionally, its sub-folders looking for documents and create shortcuts/buttons in the menu.

The tool will create new shortcuts/buttons on the currently selected menu page so the first thing you should do is navigate to the page where you want the new buttons to be created then open the tool.

Right click anywhere on the menu display background. This will bring up the admin menu. Select Create Shortcuts.



Start by typing the document path into the *Path* edit box or click the *Browse* button to browse to the folder containing your documents.

Check the *Include sub-folders* checkbox if you want it to look in sub-folders as well.

Check the *Create new page* checkbox if you want it to create a new page on the menu that will contain these document buttons. This page will be a sub-page of the page you have currently selected. By default, the name of the page will be the name of the folder you select in the *Path* edit box. You can modify this page name using the *Page Name* edit box or just rename the shortcut sub-folder later.

The *Included Files* box helps you control which files are targets for shortcuts/buttons. Click the check-boxes to specify which types of documents or files you want included. You can fine tune your selection by manually modifying the spec in the edit box.

In the *Page Structure* box, choose if you want to maintain the folder structure found in your documents folders so that your page will contain sub-pages mimicking the folder structure of the actual documents folder. If you select the second option, all buttons will be created on a single page regardless of which sub-folder they were found in.

In the *Overwrite Existing Shortcuts* box, select if you want to overwrite existing shortcuts, never overwrite (skip) existing shortcuts or prompt for each existing shortcut.

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Remember, the page structure in Really Simple Menu mimics the folder structure within the *Shortcuts* folder so if you need to change the page structure all you have to do is re-arrange the sub-folders within the *Shortcuts* folder. If you need to rename the pages, just rename the sub-folders.

Configuration File Options

These are the available options in the ReallySimpleMenu.ini configuration file. There is no configuration application, just open this ini file in any text editor. Each option is a 'key=value' pair. For example:

```
[options]
title=Really Simple Menu
```

Key	Value
title	The main title text.
title-font	Font name for the main title.
sub-title	The sub-title text.
sub-title-font	Font name for the sub-title.
logo	File name of any image file to display in the top left corner. The image can be jpg, jpeg, tif, tiff, png or gif. The space for the image is a fixed size. The image will be stretched to fill the space.
button-size	The starting size of the buttons. See the discussion below. 3=biggest 8=smallest
full-screen	Optional full screen mode. This takes over the primary monitor and looks more like how a kiosk would look. 0=normal 1=full screen
header-color	Background color of the header area. See the discussion on colors below.
nav-color	Background color of the navigation area.
background-color	Background color of the main button area.
footer-color	Background color of the footer area.
find-visible	Visibility of the Find option. Always available in admin mode. 1=visible 0=not visible default=1
quit-visible	Visibility of the Quit option. Always available in admin mode. 1=visible 0=not visible default=1

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slideshow-visible	Visibility of the Slideshow option. Always available in admin mode. 1=visible 0=not visible default=1
slideshow-time	Seconds to display each image in the slideshow. default=20
button-size-visible	Visibility of the Button Size option. Always visible in admin mode. 1=visible 0=not visible default=1
idle-home-time	Minutes with no activity (keyboard/mouse) after which the menu will automatically return to the home page. Note that Windows Task Manager sends a constant stream of mouse move events so this won't work while Task Manager is open. 0=disabled >0=enabled default=0
system-image-viewer-visible	Visibility of the system image viewer button on the internal image viewer toolbar. You'll need this enabled if you want to allow the end user to print photos or any other kind of image manipulation. Always visible in admin mode. 1=visible 0=not visible default=0

Colors

Colors are specified in one of two ways:

BGR

A six character bgr (reverse rgb) hexadecimal number.

Think of this number as divided into three color elements, each element is a two digit number.

BBGGRR

The first two digits represent the level of blue, the second represent the level of green, the third two represent the level of red.

RGB

A seven character rgb number. The first character is the hash symbol, '#', followed by a six character hexadecimal number.

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Think of this number as divided into the prefix and three elements, each element is a two digit number.

#RRGGBB

The hash prefix denotes rgb format, as opposed to the earlier bgr format, next is two digits that represent the level of red, two digits that represent the level of green and two digits that represent the level of blue.

Each color element has a range of 00-ff (or 0-255 in decimal). In bgr format, ff0000 is blue, 00ff00 is green, 0000ff is red. ffffff is white (all color elements at maximum), 000000 is black (all color elements are off). You can set each color element to any value between 00 and ff. Half way between fully off and fully on would be 80. If all three were set to half way, 808080, you would have a gray (grey) color.

Google Color Picker

Go to Google and type in “color picker”. This presents a simple color picker with a slider. On the left, you’ll see the resulting hexadecimal color number with the hash (#) prefix. Select a color you like by clicking on the main color area and using the slider then highlight the complete hexadecimal number on the left, including the hash prefix, and copy and paste this straight into the ReallySimpleMenu.ini file.

Button Size

This impacts how much text a button caption can display, how big an image preview on the button will be and how many buttons can be seen on the screen. The bigger the button, the more caption text, the bigger the image preview. The smaller the button, the less text, the smaller the image preview, the more buttons on the screen. The values range from 3 to 8 where 3 is the biggest size and 8 is the smallest. The default is 5.

I’ve already had questions about these numbers so here is the answer: In normal non-full-screen mode, a button size of 3 will display 3 buttons across and 8 will display 8 buttons across. Of course, in full screen mode there’s many more buttons so this doesn’t make sense any more but the numbers remain nonetheless.

Main Header Over-ride

In the ReallySimpleMenu.ini configuration file, there are two options to modify the main title text: *title* and *sub-title*. If you find you want a little more control over the title text you can create a *header.rtf* file using Wordpad or Word or any 'rich text' editor. Place this file in the main directory with ReallySimpleMenu.exe. During start-up, this file is loaded and displayed in place of the standard title and sub-title text.

Page Headers

Each page may display informational text at the top of the contents or button area. Create a *page-header.rtf* file using Wordpad or Word or any 'rich text' editor. Place this file in the shortcut folder in question. The file is loaded and displayed above the page contents.

Release Notes

Version v1.4

August 2019

Initial public release. A few early versions went out locally but this is the first public release. This is a really basic but still useful hierarchical menu system. The whole point is to keep it really simple to use with nothing to distract or confuse the user and so the display will remain sparse. I'm adding more display customization options and tools to help when there's a lot of documents to be imported. It's not Unicode but if there's any kind of demand, I'll add it in. Keep an eye on the web page for new releases and let me know your thoughts in the web site forum.

Version v1.5

August 2019

I've made lots of changes to both the user interface and the engine while I continue to build up the kind of system I have in mind so I won't document everything I've done. The tool to automate importing documents is an important addition and the engine code that correctly responds to changes in the underlying shortcuts has also been greatly expanded. There is also much bug fixing, optimising and leak plugging.

Change 1: Added admin mode.

Change 2: Added the Create Shortcuts tool.

Change 3: If there are no shortcuts in a given folder then a contents-like display will be made from its sub-folders. In full screen mode this contents display will be two columns.

Change 4: Thumbnails for image files.

Version v1.6

September 2019

Change 1: Added status text to loading and working forms.

Change 2: Added *quit* option to ini file.

Change 3: Added context menu options to adjust button size.

Change 4: Added *header.rtf* and *page-header.rtf* file options.

Change 5: Fixed various bugs and crashes.

Change 6: I'm not supposed to remove the extension from the file name when creating the link file name, simply append the ".lnk" extension. So a target file of *picture.jpg* will have a shortcut of *picture.jpg.lnk*. This was causing problems in the situation where I had two files of the same name but different extensions, such as: *picture.jpg* and *picture.txt*. Now we have *picture.jpg.lnk* and *picture.txt.lnk*. This is very useful in a situation where you have a photo collection with a text file description for each photo.

Change 7: Added colors to the configuration file.

Version v1.7

September 2019

There's probably changes and bug fixes not listed here but this is the gist of it. I'm slowly approaching my goal. I'm developing a procedure to use this as a Windows shell replacement for a kiosk. If you're interested drop me a note on the forums.

Change 1: Resolved race condition in image preview thread.

Change 2: Added bmp files to supported image file formats.

Change 3: Added admin context menu to folder buttons.

Change 4: Added MS Access databases (mdb) to Create Shortcuts tool.

Change 5: Added slideshow option for folders with images.

Version v1.8

October 2019

Some nice user tools added, lots more admin control in the ini file and possibly other stuff.

Change 1: Added the Find tool.

Change 2: Added many visibility options to the ini file. The admin can better control the functions available to the user.

Change 3: Added idle home timer.

Change 4: Added a really simple internal image viewer with an option to open the image in the system defined viewer.