

AppControlPanel

(Version 1.1.3 -- Released September 14, 2013)

Introduction

AppControlPanel is a utility to start or stop programs, script files, or batch files on computers running the Windows® operating system.

Installation

Run the installation package file, **AppControlPanelSetup.exe**. This will install **AppControlPanel.exe** and all required supporting files on your computer. The installer will suggest a default location for the program file. You may change the location or leave it at the default, it does not matter. However, the **AppControlPanel.rtf** file must be located in the same directory as the **AppControlPanel.exe** file.

Program Operation

The first time you start the program, the main form shown in Figure 1 will be displayed.

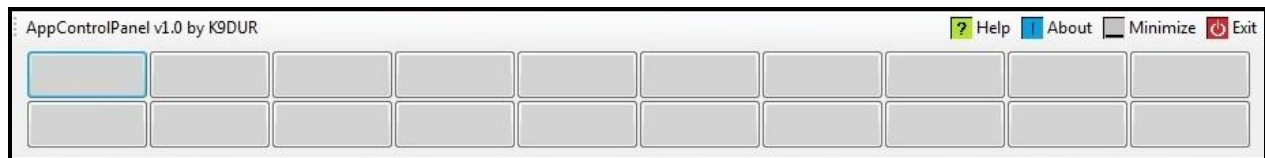


Figure 1 – Initial Main Form

An example of the main form after a few buttons have been set up is shown in Figure 2.

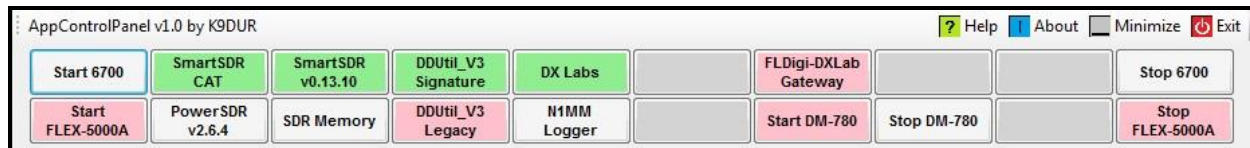


Figure 2 – Main Form After Some Buttons Have Been Setup

Once you have **AppControlPanel** setup, its operation is extremely simple.

- To start a program, click on its button.
- To stop a program, click on its button again.

The color of the buttons gives the following information about the associated program:

- A green background indicates that the program is running.
- A red background indicates that the program cannot be started because a required program is not running, an excluded program is running, or both.

Setup Form

Right-clicking on a button will allow you to set up that button. If the button has not previously been set up, then the form shown in Figure 3 will be displayed.

Figure 4 shows a sample setup form for a button that has been setup.

Setup Button #6

Application Path & File Name Browse

Application Working Directory Browse

Command-Line Parameters

Button Label Start Minimized

Must Already Be Running

Must Not Be Running

Save Changes Cancel Changes Clear Button

Copy or Move Button #6

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20

Copy Move Cancel

Figure 3 – Blank Setup Form

Setup Button #4

Application Path & File Name C:\DDUtil_V3\DDUtil_V3.exe Browse

Application Working Directory C:\DDUtil_V3 Browse

Command-Line Parameters /F6K

Button Label DDUtil_V3 Signature Start Minimized

Must Already Be Running

Must Not Be Running DDUtil_V3, /Leg

Save Changes Cancel Changes Clear Button

Copy or Move Button #4

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20

Copy Move Cancel

Figure 4 –Setup Form with Sample Data

The form is divided into two sections. The top section allows you to set up a button, while the bottom section allows you to copy or move the current button setup to a different button.

To set up a button, fill in the required information in the following boxes:

Application Path & File Name (required)

Enter the full path & name of the program you wish to control with this button. Clicking on the "Browse" button will open a file dialog which will allow you navigate to the file and select it.

Application Working Directory (optional)

Some programs required a specific start-up directory in order to start properly. If this is the case, enter the full path of the required directory in this box. Clicking on the "Browse" button will open a dialog which will allow you navigate to the directory and select it.

Command-Line Parameters (optional)

Some programs allow you to specify parameters on the command line to control how the program starts. Enter any desired command-line parameters in this box. Multiple parameters are separated by a space.

Button Label (required)

This box allows you specify the text that is displayed on the button.

Start Minimized

Checking this box will cause the program to be minimized to the task bar when it starts.

Must Already Be Running (optional)

This box allows you to specify one or more programs which must already be running before this program is allowed to start. Enter the name of the program, with or without the file extension. For example: If you want Notepad to be running before you can start the program, you can enter either "Notepad" or "Notepad.exe".

If you wish to specify multiple programs, enter each program on a separate line.

You can also specify command-line parameters for the prerequisite program. Add a comma (,) after the program name and then enter one or more command-line parameters separated by spaces. If you specify one or more command-line parameters, the program will not be considered to be running unless it was started with the specified parameter(s).

Must Not Be Running (optional)

This box allows you to specify one or more programs which must not be running before this program can be allowed to start. Enter the name of the program, with or without the file extension. For example: If you want Notepad to be running before you can start the program, you can enter either "Notepad" or "Notepad.exe".

If you wish to specify multiple programs, enter each program on a separate line.

You can also specify command-line parameters for the excluded program. Add a comma (,) after the program name and then enter one or more command line parameters separated by spaces. If you specify one or more command-line parameters, the program will not be considered to be running unless it was started with the specified parameter(s).

"Save Changes" Button

Clicking on this button will save your changes and close the setup form.

"Cancel Changes" Button

Clicking on this button will cancel your changes and close the setup form.

"Clear Button" Button

Clicking on this button will clear the setup information entered for the current button.

The lower section of the setup form (shown in Figure 5) allows you to copy or move the setup information of the current button to a different button.



Figure 5 –Copy/Move Section of Setup Form

The 20 buttons on the setup form represent the 20 buttons on the main window. When you open the setup form, the current button is shown with a red background and is disabled. (You cannot copy or move a button to itself.) Also, the Copy and Move buttons are initially disabled.

Click on the button you wish to copy or move the current button to. The new button will be highlighted with a light blue background and the Copy and Move buttons will be enabled.

"Copy" Button

Clicking on this button will copy the setup information from the current button to the selected button and close the setup form. The setup information for the current button will be unchanged.

"Move" Button

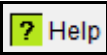



Clicking on this button will move the setup information from the current button to the selected button and close the setup form. The setup information for the current button will be cleared.

"Cancel" Button

Clicking on this button will discard any changes and close the setup form.

Toolbar

The toolbar contains the following items (left-to-right):

 Help	Clicking on this button will open a window to display this document.
 About	Clicking on this button will open a window that displays basic information about the program.
 Minimize	Clicking on this button will minimize the main window to the system tray. Restore the program by double-clicking on the icon in the system tray.
 Exit	Clicking on this button will close the program.

System Tray Icon & Menu

AppControlPanel displays an icon in the system tray (notification) area of the Windows screen.

Double-clicking on this icon will minimize the main window to the system tray. Double-clicking on it again will restore the main window to its normal state.

Right-clicking on this icon will display the menu shown in Figure 6.

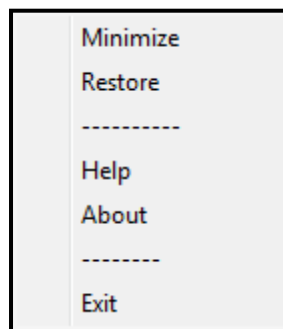


Figure 6 -- System Tray Icon Menu

Clicking on one of the items in the menu will perform the following actions:

- **Minimize** -- Minimize the main window to the system tray.
- **Restore** -- Restore the main window to its normal state.
- **Help** -- Open a window to display this document.
- **About** -- Open a window that displays basic information about the program.
- **Exit** -- Close the program.

Starting/Stopping Multiple Programs

You can start or stop multiple programs with a single button by using VB Script (.vbs) files or batch (.bat) files and setting up the button to start the script or batch file.

Here is an example of a VB Script file that will start four different programs:

```
Dim WshShell
Set WshShell = WScript.CreateObject("WScript.Shell")

WshShell.CurrentDirectory = "C:\Program Files\FlexRadio Systems\SmartSDR CAT"
WshShell.Exec("C:\Program Files\FlexRadio Systems\SmartSDR CAT\Cat.exe")
WScript.Sleep(2000)
WshShell.Exec("C:\Program Files\FlexRadio Systems\SmartSDR
v0.13.10\SmartSDR.exe")
WScript.Sleep(1000)
WshShell.CurrentDirectory = "C:\DDUtil_V3"
WshShell.Run "C:\DDUtil_V3\DDUtil_V3.exe /F6K", 7
WScript.Sleep(1000)
WshShell.Exec("C:\DXLab\Launcher\DXLabLauncher.exe")
```

Here is an example of a batch file that stops the programs started by the script file:

```
taskkill /IM SmartSDR.exe
taskkill /IM DDUtil_V3.exe
taskkill /IM DXLabLauncher.exe
taskkill /IM CAT.exe
```

About the Author

AppControlPanel.exe was written by Ray Andrews, K9DUR.

Ray holds an Amateur Extra class license and was first licensed in April 1960. He currently resides in West Terre Haute, IN, and is a retired electronic design engineer and software developer. He operates a small custom software consulting business just to keep him out of mischief between camping trips.

For more information, visit Ray's web pages:

<http://k9dur.info>

<http://www.rnaconsultingservices.com>

Revision History

v1.1.3 – September 14, 2013 -- Fixed bug where StartMinimized setting was not being saved on program exit.

v1.1.2 – September 13, 2013 -- Fixed bug where StartMinimized setting was not being loaded on program startup.

v1.1.1 – September 3, 2013 -- Fixed bug where Clear Button function & Start Minimized setting were not being saved correctly.

v1.1.0 – September 2, 2013 -- Changed program to minimize to system tray & added system tray context menu. Added code to trap the occasional "process not running" error.

v1.0.0 – August 28, 2013 -- Initial Release.

K9DUR Software License Agreement

Software written by Ray Andrews, K9DUR, for amateur radio use may be freely copied by any licensed amateur radio operator for their own personal use.

Other than the cost of the distribution media, no fee may be charged for the distribution of the software to any other party or parties.

No commercial use of the software may be made by any party without the express written consent of:

RNA Consulting Services, LLC
Post Office Box 82
West Terre Haute, IN 47885-0082.

Although the software is free, it is not open source. The programming techniques used in the development of the software are proprietary to RNA Consulting Services, LLC. The software may not be reverse engineered or de-compiled for any purpose.

No warranty, expressed or implied, is conveyed for the use of the software or for the installation of the software on any computer.