

# Tracking shortcuts and the early history of multiple monitors

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Commenter Roni put two suggestions in the suggestion box in the same entry, which is a problem for me because I feel like I'm forced to answer both of them or neither. The first ~~question~~ suggestion has to do with how shortcuts can find their targets even if they've been renamed. This is something I had covered nearly a year before the question was asked, so the reason I'm not answering that question isn't that I'm ignoring the question. It's that I already answered it. While I'm at it, here are other questions that I've already answered:

- “Did you notice that switching to/from daylight saving time changes the clock for all instances of Windows installed on a computer?” Why, yes I did. Six years previously.
- “Why can't you rename the Recycle Bin?” I answered that question two years earlier in a post with the devious title “Why can't you rename the Recycle Bin?”
- “Why in Windows 95/XP could you not drag and drop a file into a running application on the taskbar.” Ah, six years earlier, I posted an article with the provocative title “Why can't you drop directly onto a taskbar button?”

The other question was a series of questions about the history of multiple monitor support in Windows. Actually, I think I've already discussed all of the parts of this ~~question~~ suggestion, so today's entry is more like a clip show. “Remember the first time I talked about multiple monitors?” Windows 98 was the first version of Windows to support multiple monitors. (Code to support multiple monitors started being written shortly after Windows 95 was out the door, so my guess is that the preliminary design work overlapped the end of the Windows 95 project.) To facilitate development of code that takes advantage of multiple monitors, the multimon.h header file was introduced so you could code as if multiple monitor support was present in the operating system, and it would emulate the multimon APIs (with a single monitor) if running on Windows 95. In Windows 98, the maximum number of monitors was nine. There was no restriction on color depth or resolution, because the most common configuration involved one powerful graphics card combined with one really lame one.

When support for multiple monitors was ported to Windows NT, the Windows NT folks figured they could one-up the Windows 98 team. Literally. The maximum number of monitors was increased from nine to ten. Who knows, maybe someday it will go to eleven.

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