Windows Notice

Groupware for NetWare Networks and Windows

Version 1.4

Supervisor's Manual

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Disclaimer

Windows Notice is distributed as is. Windows Notice was written and tested on a Novell NetWare 3.11 file server internetwork. As far as the author is able to ascertain, it is not harmful in any way to any version of NetWare from 2.0a through 3.11. The author will not be liable for any damage to the network caused by the use or misuse of this product.

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Foreword

First, thanks for using Windows Notice!

Please note that this program is Shareware, not Freeware. You are allowed to use Windows Notice for a period of one month before you are obligated to purchase it. This is longer than the usual shareware trial period because of the nature of groupware. It generally takes a little longer to determine if a groupware program will be of practical use to your group, because more than one or two people are usually involved in the acclimation period of these products. And not all of the people involved are as convinced as you are of the products usefulness.

The cost of Windows Notice is based on the number of users. Current pricing can be found in the order form included in this package. Networks with more than 50 users may discuss lower rates on a unlimited site license agreement with the author on an individual basis.

Please direct any comments, suggestions, or site license requests to:

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Purpose

The purpose of Windows Notice is to allow a member of a group (in this case the group consists of those people with a user account on a NetWare file server) to leave a message for the others concerning his or her whereabouts, possible contact points, and/or information concerning the expected return date and time.

Windows Notice would not be a very useful tool if its use were limited only to those times your machine is turned on -- perhaps while you are out to lunch. However, Windows Notice uses the static nature of your NetWare file server's bindery to save a short message concerning your location or status for as long as you deem it necessary.

Furthermore, Windows Notice is a suite of tools. Displaying a message on your console is only useful to those who happen to come by your desk. Network software

has far more potential. Windows Notice allows you to check the message/status of another user from your workstation, as well.

GroupWare

It will be your job as the system administrator to provide the necessary training on the proper use of this product, and more importantly, the motivation to use the product. Remember, most groupware products, in order to be really useful, must be used properly and religiously by at least a good share of the members of a group. Windows Notice is no exception.

Use

From the main dialog box, you as the supervisor may choose to display a message, check the location of another user, clear a persistent message or perform user maintenance tasks.

The Display Message Dialog Box

Display Message allows one to either display a message on the screen and store it in his or her bindery object's user status property for others to read, or just store the message in the bindery object property and return. The latter method is called a persistent message, meaning that the message is active even though it is not being displayed on the workstation.

The Display Message dialog box has many options, most of which are self explanatory. Among these are: Speed, which may be set to Fast, Medium or Slow; Typeface, which may be set to Roman (Serifed font) or Swiss (San Serifed font). Any time this dialog box is displayed, favorite display strings may be added to the favorites list box. When favorites are added in this manner, they are included in the WNOTICE.INI file in the windows sub directory and thus are made permanent.

Finally, the No Display and Persistent Message check boxes allow a user to activate a bindery message without displaying it. The state of these two check boxes are tied to one another, because the use of the No Display check box implies Persistent Message as well, as it makes no sense to set No Display then and not set Persistent Message -- you would be telling it to do nothing. However, you might set Persistent Message without setting No Display. This would mean you with the message to remain active when the display is cancelled.

The WhereIs Dialog Box

WhereIs is the complement of Display Message. WhereIs allows a user to display a message activated by another user. The WhereIs dialog box contains a list box with a list of Windows Notice users. Scroll to the desired user and that user's message will appear in the message box, and the date and time the message was entered will appear in their proper fields as well.

The Camp option at the bottom of the WhereIs screen borrows a term from some telephone systems -- to Camp on an extension in these systems is to ask the phone system to call you back when the desired party has hung up from his or her current call. Windows Notice uses a similar technique to these phone systems. It allows a user to poll the status field of another user's bindery message. When the polled party's status changes (either from active to inactive or vice-versa) then a short alarm is sounded and the WhereIs window is restored from it's iconic state. The poll time is limited currently to about 64 seconds, however, if it is set to a higher value, it will, modulate around 64 seconds (it will become the remainder of a division by 64).

The Clear Persistent Message Button

This button is used to clear a persistent message previously set without entering the Display String dialog box. It does no harm to clear a persistent message if a message was never set.

The User Maintenance Dialog Box

User Maintenance is the addition or deletion of the USER_STATUS property from a user's bindery object. The user must be Supervisor or Supervisor Equivalent in order access the User Maintenance dialog box. In other cases, the User Maintenance button is grayed and disabled.

The property must be added to all users who need to use Windows Notice. Windows Notice will display a scrolling message on any workstation, however, only those users whose bindery objects contain the Windows Notice property will be broadcasting their display messages. Only those users will show up in the WhereIs dialog box user list.

Leaving a message

While you are gone and have left an active message displayed on your console,

Windows Notice allows others to leave you messages. When a key is pressed (except for escape) a dialog box is popped up and the passerby is allowed to type a short message which will be stored for you and displayed when you return. Windows Notice also captures Network broadcasts to you in this same message queue. This means that another user may user the NetWare SEND command to "Send" Windows Notice a message just as if he or she had typed it in at your console while you were away.

When you return and enter your password at the password dialog box, you will be shown these messages in the form of a display message dialog box. You may scroll back and forth through these messages until you are satisfied and then press exit to leave Windows Notice.

Exiting the Display Window

To exit the Display Window when you return, simply press escape and enter your NetWare password. The message window will disappear and you will be left in Windows as it was before you started the display.

If others left messages for you, you will have the opportunity to look through them before Windows Notice exits.

Installation

To install the program, just copy WNOTICE.EXE and the NWCALLS.DLL to your Windows sub directory.

Configuration

The only configuration necessary is to set the Server = <server name> option in WNOTICE.INI (under the [StartUp] section of the file and located in the Windows sub directory), OR to set the NOTEWARE = <server name> or NOTICE_SERVER = <server name> DOS environment variables. These variables allow Windows Notice to access the server which contains bindery objects with the USER_STATUS property, in an internetwork environment. One of these variables MUST be set or Windows Notice will fail to initialize.

The WNOTICE.INI file

You may create a file in your Windows subdirectory called WNOTICE.INI which

takes the following format:

```
[StartUp]
Server=FS1                              ; notice server

[Defaults]
Speed=2                                 ; scroll speed 1 = slow, 3 = fast
TypeFace=1                              ; 1 = roman and 2 = swiss

[Favorites]
Str00=Out to lunch - back at 12:30      ; favorite display string list
Str01=In training, back by 2:00         ;   up to 99 are accepted
```

The [StartUp] section contains information necessary to initialize WNOTICE properly.

The [Defaults] section contains other display preference information. The list under [Favorites] is created by WNOTICE if you add strings to the favorites list box in the display dialog box, or you may add them manually to the .INI file.

Network Configuration

WNOTICE works by modifying a bindery object property for the user. When in use, this property contains the user's message and other pertinent information.

In order for this to work, the property must exist for the user's bindery object. WNOTICE uses the same bindery object property name and format as Pertly Utilities' NOTICE [1] program for DOS. Thus, both programs read and write similar information. Note that Windows Notice was written entirely independently of NOTICE for DOS. It is possible that future versions will become incompatible, however, it is the author's intention to maintain that compatibility for as long as is practical.

WNOTICE has the capability to add this property (named USER_STATUS) to bindery objects if you are not already using NOTICE for DOS. This functionality is accessed through the User Maintenance Button on the Main dialog box. However, you must be Supervisor or Supervisor equivalent on the notice server in order to access this button.

[1] Pertly Utilities and NOTICE are trademarks of Pertly Computing.