

Control Panel

Section Five

Overview of the Control Panel tool set

The Control Panel

GENERAL

We will discuss the changes found in the Control Panel (from Windows 98/2000 to Windows XP) so that you are familiar with new options and/or changes in old options. It should be said here that changes made to items in the control panel can have profound effects on system performance and/or resources your computer accesses. ALWAYS move carefully through any changes made and perform those changes one at a time making sure that each process is fully successful.

THE DEFAULT CONTROL PANEL

Unlike previous versions of Windows the default view of the Control Panel looks like the figure at the top of the next page. Directly after that figure is the Cal Poly default configuration.

We have modified the display to augment user understanding and simplify their ability to adapt quickly to the new operating system. You can toggle back and forth from XP Default to Cal Poly default (or classic view) by clicking on the *Control Panel Switch to Classic View* option in the upper left hand corner of the dialog box.

FIGURE 1. Control Panel View option



FIGURE 2. XP Default Control Panel



CHANGES IN THE CONTROL PANEL

FIGURE 3. The Control Panel



Besides the new design in icons, there is not much change in the toolset from Windows 2000 to XP. For those of you who move from Windows 98 to XP, the control panel offers several icons that previously were not there (i.e.; Administrative Tools). Just as most of XP, the real changes are made underneath and are not obvious. The control panel is the source for most troubleshooting resources and provides a wide spectrum of tools that can prove helpful. Since we will discuss Networking in another section of this manual we will not address any of the networking resources found here.

NEW ICONS

New icons (to both Windows 98 and 2000) are:

1. Speech

2. Symantec Live Update
3. Java Plug-in

Only two of these icons are part of the “real” operating system, Symantec Live Update is added as part of the Symantec AntiVirus solution.

SPEECH

Windows XP advances I/O by integrating speech synthesis and recognition into the operating system which can then be accessed by various programs/applications (i.e.; MS Word) so that the user dictates to the machine and it then records that speech into text.

FIGURE 4. Speech Properties



This configuration allows users to verify and troubleshoot problems that they may have with their speech integration. Just like most of the services found in Windows, the speech resource applies across all applications requiring such resources in order to function (not only MS Word). If you are having a problem with speech recognition this is the only place you should have to look for a solution.

The Test to Speech tab allows you to alter the voice and speed of recognition.

FIGURE 5. Text to Speech



Under the Voice selection you may choose a voice (male, female, nonsex). You also alter the speed and audio output of speech.

JAVA

The Java Plug-in offers us a single location to configure Java Script. You should only modify these options when you are guided to do so.

FIGURE 6. Java Plug-in Control Panel



ADD HARDWARE

As stated in the pervious section, many new options exist for adding and trouble-shooting new hardware. You should always create restore points prior to installing any new hardware/software and when rebooting wait until the hard drive stops processing file to login.

ADD OR REMOVE PROGRAMS

As in Windows 2000, Windows XP allows programs to install via policies. Policies can be set on a computer which automatically install and upgrade applications. This process requires that the client (computer) is joined into a domain (must be an Active Directory domain). If this is the case programs can either be published or assigned to a computer.

If the program is published to a computer it will show up as an option in the Add or Remove Programs section.

FIGURE 7. Add or Remove remote applications



As you can see I have published the *Microsoft Baseline Security Analyser* from an Active Directory server so that it is available to the user when they feel like installing it. Because it is *published* this way it does not matter what level of user is logging in -- only that this machine has authorized the user to have access to the installation process. The end result is that any user having a published application has the right to install that application on whatever machine they log into (unless a specific machine is marked not to install that application).

The bottom line is that applications become mobile with the user and can be posted for installation without requiring someone to visit and install programs directly.

Administrative Tools

GENERAL

The Administrative Tool set comprises the heart of the system troubleshooting and configuration resources for both Windows 2000 and XP. The very first thing you will notice is that the Administrative Tools can be accessed several ways:

1. **START > CONTROL PANEL > ADMINISTRATIVE TOOLS**
2. Right click on *My Computer* > select **MANAGE**
3. **START > PROGRAMS > ADMINITSTRATIVE TOOLS**

You will find in Microsoft that almost everything can be accessed in more than one way.

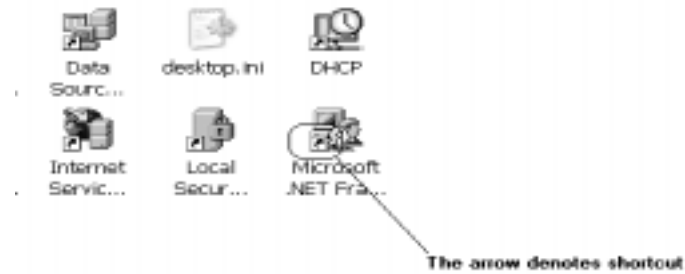
SHORT-CUTS

FIGURE 8. Administrative Tools



You will note that almost all of the icons in the Administrative Tools section are short-cuts...

FIGURE 9. Short-cut Icon



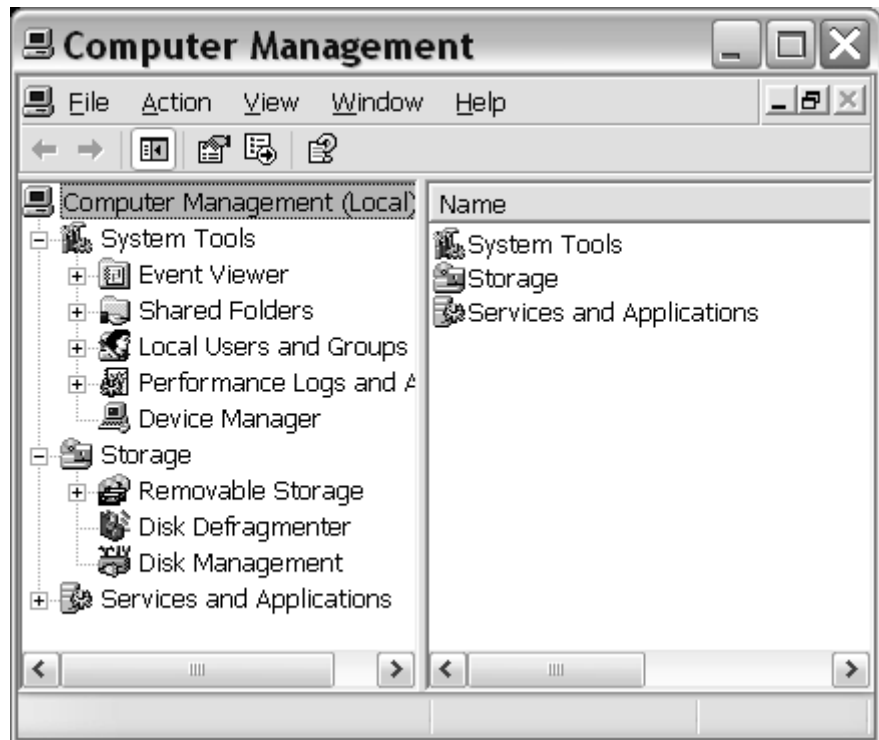
Of the short-cuts in Administrative Tools, the following is a list of most useful resources that you should become aware of:

1. Computer Management
2. Event Viewer
3. Internet Services Manager
4. Local Security Policy
5. Performance
6. Services

Of these six, the Computer Manager (also accessed through the "My Computer" icon on the desktop) includes alternative access to the following:

1. Event Viewer
2. Local Security Policy
3. Performance
4. Services

When we discuss the Computer Manager we will cover the icons access through either the Administrative Tools and Computer Manager. As a point of interest, you will find the Computer Manager to be one of the more flexible resources in the Administrative Tools section. I tend to go to the Computer Manager first before looking elsewhere for troubleshooting solutions.

COMPUTER MANAGER**FIGURE 10. Computer Manager**

The Computer Manager can be used to troubleshoot your computer as well as others. By right-clicking on the Computer Manager object at the top of the tree, you can access other computers and see the same objects in their tree (and modify those objects as if they were on your computer).

You can:

- Access their event viewer and see the actual errors they are experiencing.
- See what shares are available and who is currently accessing them.
- Review/modify local user accounts.
- View performance logs and diagnose what may be going on in their computer.
- Look at their hardware to find driver/hardware problems.
- Examine storage settings.
- Examine services and applications currently running or installed on their computer.

As you can tell, this is a powerful tool for helping others.

**INTERNET SERVICES
MANAGER**

The Internet Services Manager provides management of the Personal IIS server that can be run from a workstation.

FIGURE 11. Internet Services Manager



This resource is used in the same manner as the IIS Server.

**ICONS THAT ARE NOT
SHORT-CUTS**

In fact, there are only two icons in the Administrative Tools are aren't icons:

1. The Terminal Services Client folder
2. Desktop.ini

The Terminal Services Client folder initially contains two resources:

1. The terminal Services Client
2. The Terminal Services Client Manager

These resources are used to create and manage terminal service from your computer -- giving remote access to other systems desktops and applications. This resource is very useful in attaching to servers and other XP machines in order to take control of their system for purposes of fixing problems that the user sees without having to visit their office and take over their computer. A user can continue to work on their machine while you work on their problem.

FIGURE 12. Terminal Services Client Folder



While we do not have time in this class to examine these resources completely, be aware that you can gain access to another machine across campus and perform basic maintenance without disrupting of the client. A user must give authorization in order for you to do this.

The desktop.ini file is the file that is toggled back and forth when you move from XP Default settings to Classic mode.

