Clipboard.NET

This document will help you get the most out of Clipboard.NET. Explaining how to use it and how it can make your life much sweeter.

Summary

Who should read this document?

This document can be read by anybody with a fair understanding of Windows. You need to be familiar with the original Windows Clipboard and its shortcuts.

What this document doesn't cover

This document will not show you how to develop your own plug-ins. That is covered by the developers documentation included in the SDK.

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Installing Clipboard.NET

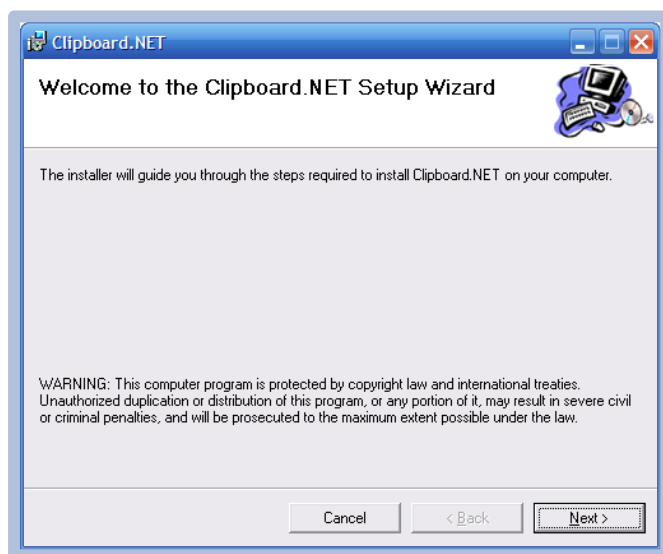### Prerequisites

To install Clipboard.NET you need to obtain a copy of the .net framework version 2.0 (available at: http://tinyurl.com/drj86)
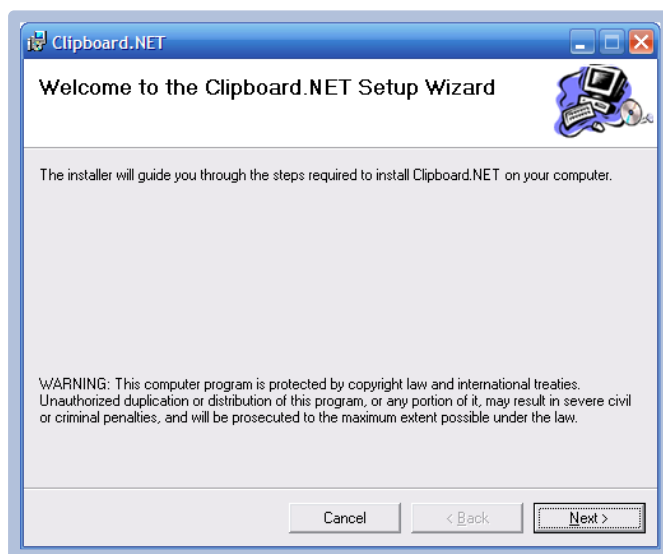
Getting a copy of Clipboard.NET

You can then visit the Clipboard.NET site and download the latest version (making sure download the .msi file and not the source code by accident[1])

When you have downloaded it, double-click the .msi file to start the installation.

And dialog will appear in-front of you just like the one above. Click Next.

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[1] The Source code version is for developers and requires and build step which is not recommended for basic users. The source code will be in a zip file with a filename suffixed with `src.zip`

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Leave all the defaults in this next window and click Next. Click next again on the next step to begin the installation. Allow Clipboard.NET to be installed, when it is finished you will get a dialog informing you the setup is finished and installation was successful. Click Close to complete the installation.

To start Clipboard.NET for the first time double-click the icon on your desktop or the one in the Start>Programs menu.

Every day use

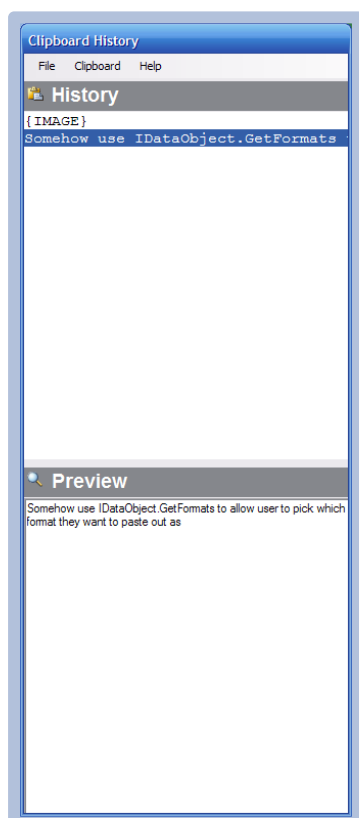The following section will show you how to use the basic features of Clipboard.NET.

Copying to the clipboard

Clipboard.NET doesn't currently affect the way items are copied to the clipboard; so you can copy items just like you would do normally, either inside an application by clicking the EDIT menu then choosing COPY or CUT, or alternatively by selecting something (like a block of text) and pressing CTRL and C on the keyboard.

Showing the clipboard viewer

The clipboard viewer is the main window which allows you to see a list of the items that were previously in your clipboard. You can also see a preview of each item in the list.

To show the clipboard viewer simply double click on the icon in your NOTIFY AREA in the TASKBAR, or hold CTRL and press COMMA (,).

THE CLIPBOARD HISTORY LIST. This displays the items which are and previously were in your clipboard. You can move down the list using the up and down arrow keys on your keyboard or left-clicking on an item with your mouse.

THE PREVIEW PANE. This shows the currently selected item, in the history list, in much more detail. It can show images, files, HTML, plain text etc.. in its native form.

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Pasting

You can paste the most recent item in the clipboard the same way you would if Clipboard.NET wasn't even installed; either from inside an application by clicking PASTE in the EDIT menu, or by holding down CTRL and pressing V on your keyboard.

If you want to paste an item which *was* in the clipboard, show the clipboard viewer (as directed above) chose an item from the list and either DOUBLE-CLICK on it or press RETURN on your keyboard and it will be pasted into the top-most application.

Say for example you want to paste something out of Notepad and into Word..

Notepad to Word Example

1. Select the text you wish to copy from Notepad and go EDIT then COPY
2. Go into Word and copy something entirely different, so that what you copied in Notepad is no longer in Windows Clipboard
3. Press Ctrl and comma (,) and find the block of text you copied from Notepad
4. Make sure this item is selected in the history list (you can tell because it will be highlighted in the list and shown in the preview pane) and hit the RETURN key on your clipboard
5. Clipboard.NET will hide the main window and paste the block of text you originally copied from Notepad into Word.
6. Notice if you press CTRL and V, it will paste the Notepad text again rather than the block of text you copied from Word? Clipboard.NET places whichever item you pasted from its clipboard viewer into the Windows clipboard for easy access.

Screenshot Example

1. Press the screenshot button on your keyboard (usually marked PRT SC[2])
2. Now press Ctrl and comma to bring up the clipboard viewer
3. Select the entry marked as an Image, notice you can see the screenshot in the preview pane
4. Open up Paint or any other image editor
5. Go back to the clipboard viewer and hit the RETURN key on your keyboard to paste the item into the image editor

Clever stuff in Clipboard.NET

Say for instance you simply wanted to save the screenshot in the previous example to a file. Clipboard.NET allows you to do this without opening your image editor using plug-ins…

Screenshot Example Revisited

1. Follow the screenshot example again up to step 3
2. Instead of opening your image editor right-click on the item in the history list
3. Click on the SAVE AS FILE option
4. Choose where you want to save the file and give it a name
5. Hit Save and your screenshot will be saved!

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[2] Laptop users may find they need to hold the FN key as PRT SC is sometimes the alternate key meaning.

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How did it do that?

Clever stuff eh? This is all bought to you by a feature we call plug-ins. (In this example the plug-in is the SAVE AS FILE option that appeared when you right-clicked the image in the HISTORY LIST) Plug-ins are the main focus for this following section…

Plug-ins

So what are plug-ins? Plug-ins are a small piece of functionality which can be performed on certain types of clipboard data, they can either be shipped with Clipboard.NET or from a Third-Party provider.

What can plug-ins do?

Plug-ins can do pretty much anything with a particular type of clipboard item[3]. The main concept of plug-ins was to be able to paste an item in a slightly different format[4] or modify the item before pasting it back out again. However plug-ins are also being used to save the user time, for example; by performing a task which would usually involve opening one or more applications and requiring numerous steps to complete. (Just like the screenshot example)

Another good example of plug-ins at work is the del.icio.us plug-in which allows you to post URLs to your del.icio.us account. *Please note this example requires you to have a del.icio.us account*.

The del.icio.us Example

1. Select and copy the following text: "I really enjoy Clipboard.NET (http://clipmon32.sourceforge.net) it is much better than Office Clipboard!"
2. Show the clipboard viewer
3. Right-click on the top item (which will contain the text you just copied) and choose del.icio.us
4. A browser window will open allowing to you post the URL (http://clipmon32.sourceforge.net) into your favourites

You can also go through the del.icio.us example again but instead of choosing the del.icio.us plug-in you could choose to open the URL into a browser window!

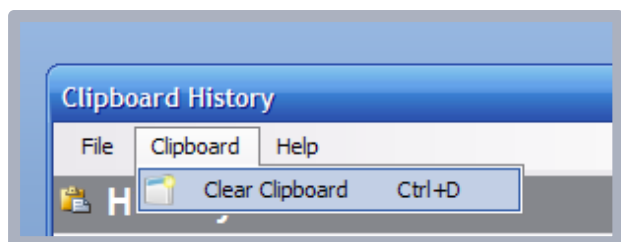## Menus and Settings

Clearing the Clipboard History

If you wish to clear the contents of the Windows clipboard and also every item in the history list[5]; you can do so by showing the clipboard viewer and choosing CLIPBOARD then CLEAR CLIPBOARD from the menu. Alternatively you may press CTRL and D, which has the same effect.

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[3] For instance the SAVE AS FILE plug-in can only be performed on clipboard items which contain images.
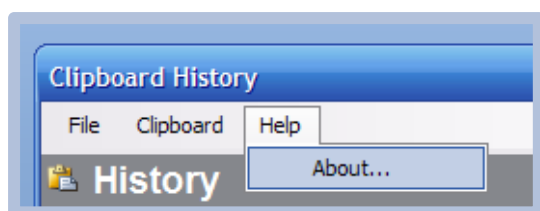[4] Such as the PASTE TEXT AS HTML plug-in.
[5] Having a large amount of items such as images inside the history list can have an impact on the overall performance of your machine.
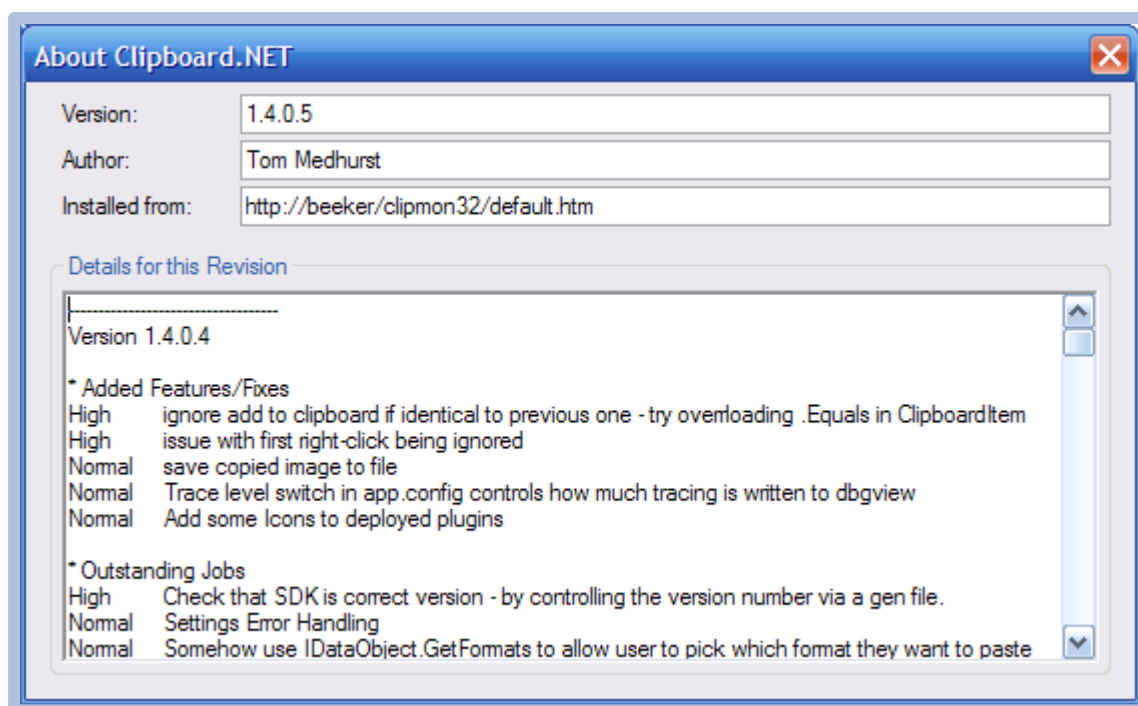
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Clipboard.NET version and revision history

To see which version of Clipboard.NET you are using and what has changed in different versions, you can press HELP then ABOUT… in the clipboard viewer's menu.

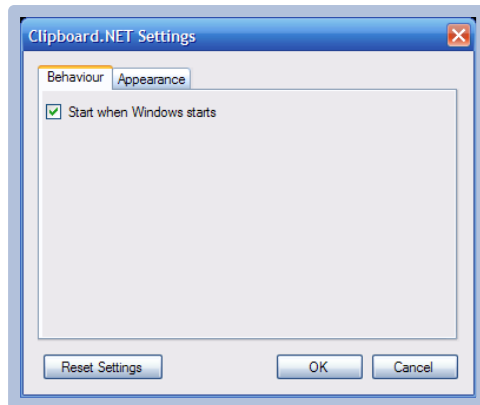This brings up the About & Versioning Dialog, which will look something like the screenshot below:

You can have a flick through the revision history of Clipboard.NET to see what has changed and what is still outstanding development work[6].

The settings menu

The settings menu can be accessed by clicking FILE then SETTINGS from the clipboard viewer's menu.

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[6] This is not a complete list of what is still outstanding. For a complete list of outstanding work visit the Feature Requests site at: http://sourceforge.net/tracker/?group_id=172945&atid=863591

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Settings are broken into categories, which should give you an idea of what they do. Any settings for Third-Party controls will also appear here. All preferences are remembered; so if you shut down Clipboard.NET and restart it your preferences will be preserved.

Here is a description of the settings that currently appear in a standard, shipped copy of Clipboard.NET…

Start when Windows Starts
This option allows you to control whether Clipboard.NET will start when you first turn your computer on. Un-checking this option will mean you will need to start Clipboard.NET manually each time you start your machine.
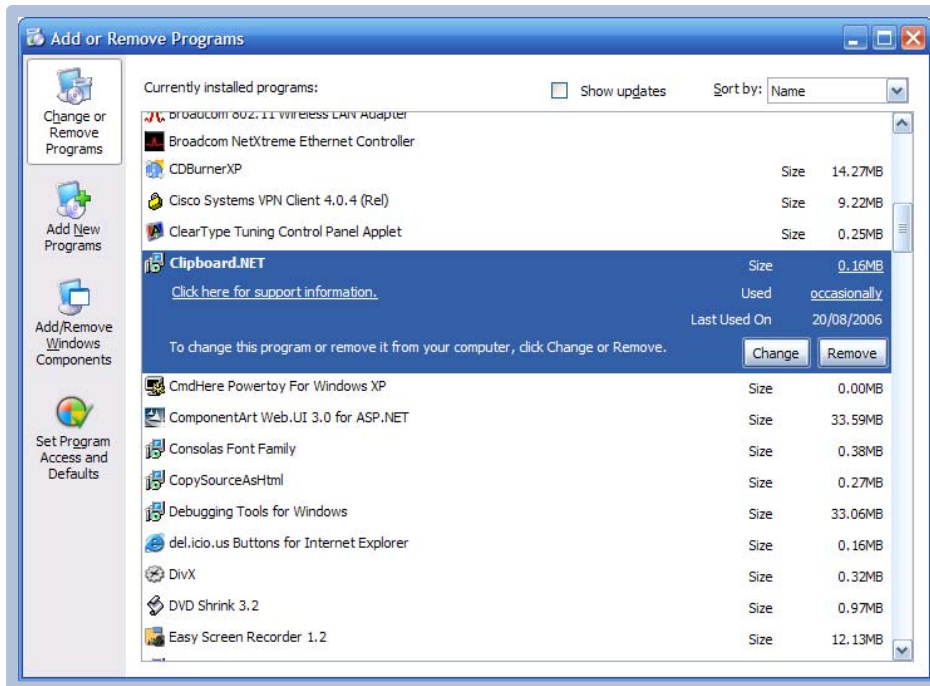
Splitter Orientation
This determines if the preview pane is show to the right or underneath the history list. Setting this option to Horizontal will mean that the preview pane appears on the right of the history list.

Uninstalling Clipboard.NET
To uninstall Clipboard.NET go to the Add and Remove programs window in the Control Panel and scroll down until you see Clipboard.NET. Select it and press the Remove button to start the uninstall.

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Accept all the steps presented to you in the uninstall wizard and Clipboard.NET will be completely removed from your PC.