

Tip #24-HandStory-faking a schedule

This â??tipâ?• is very specialized, but some may find it usefulâ?¦

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Though I REALLY love HandStory (itâ??s my first choice for offline browsers) I have one small issue: There is no way to schedule when clips are updated. I leave my PC on 24/7, so faithfully around Midnight, HandStory auto-updates. Not bad, but unfortunatly, that causes any late-breaking news and weather to be missed by the time I come into the office at 07:30 AM. The problem is that HandStory doesnâ??t let me schedule WHEN to update clips. Ideally, I would like to be able to schedule multiple updates throughout the day, but for now, we can only have it auto-update once per day.

That said, one nice feature of HandStory, is that the first time it is run on a given day, HandStory initiates an auto-update. So, I needed a way to have it auto-start at a specific time to initiate the auto-update at that time. But thatâ??s only half of the battle. I also needed a way to auto-stop HandStory. If I canâ??t auto-stop it, and it runs run 24/7, it will fall back to the â??update at Midnightâ?• schedule. So, hereâ??s a method for auto-starting and auto-stopping HandStory at a pre-determined time. Itâ??s a bit kludgy, but it worksâ?¦

Part 1: Auto-start HandStory HOWTO:

1. Click on Start > Programs > Accessories > System Tools and select â??Scheduled Tasksâ?• This opens the Windows Task Scheduler. For those who donâ??t know, this is a tool that lets you schedule a program to run at a given time on given days.

2. Click on file > new and select â??Scheduled Taskâ?• and name the new task â??HandStoryâ?•

3. Next, right-click on the newly created task and select Properties.

4. Click the Browse button and navigate to the directory that contains the HandStory.exe program (typically, â??c:Program FilesSony HandHeldâ?•) and select the HandStory.exe program.

5. Next, click on the â??Scheduleâ?• tab. and select the frequency you want to run the file. because i typically run HandStory at work, I selected â??Weeklyâ?•, selected a â??Start Timeâ?• of 07:00 AM and

then checked off the days of the work week (Monday-Friday) I left all other settings in all other tabs as default.

6. Finally, I clicked on â??OKâ?• to save the changes.

Note: depending on your setup, you may be required to enter a password based on the user selected to run the program.

OK, HandStory is now scheduled to run at 07:00 AM every weekday morning. What should happen is that once HandStory fires up for the first time on a given day, it should auto-initiate a clip update. HandStory only does this once per day, so the first time it is run, it should auto-run.

Part 2: Auto-terminate HandStory HOWTO:

The next step is to auto-shutdown HandStory at a pre-determined time. The reason for this is that if you leave it running 24/7, it will auto-update at Midnightâ??which is what we are trying to avoid. To do this, we need a way to automatically terminate HandStory. Unfortunatly, Windows doesnâ??t offer any â??process killâ?• command, so we have to turn to a simple, freeware app called â??pskillâ?•.

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1. Download the freeware app called â??pskillâ?• from this site. This app is a simple command line application that will kill a process based on (among other things) the process name. Unzip it, and place the executable in your system path. (like WindowsSystem32)

2. Next, fire up the â??Scheduled Tasksâ?• app again as detailed above, and create a new scheduled task. This time, click on Browse and navigate to the directory where you placed the pskill app. Select the app and press OK.

3. Next, in the â??Runâ?• box, fter the pskill.exe command, press the Space bar once and then type in â??HandStory.exeâ?• without the quotes. This establishes HandStory.exe as the parameter for the pskill command.

4. Finally, set the schedule for this new task like you did above. I leave work around 05:00 PM, so I set this task to be scheduled every Week Night at 07:00 PM.

5. Click OK to save the changes.

That should do it.

What you should have now is a task that auto-starts HandStory at a pre-determined time. Because this will be the â??first run of the dayâ?• HandStory will auto-initiate a clip update. At a later pre-determined time, HandStory will be auto-terminated preventing it to auto-update at Midnight. The next day (assuming itâ??s scheduled) the cycle will repeat.

To test, just open the â??Scheduled Taskeâ?• manager and right-click on the â??HandStoryâ?• task and select â??Runâ?•. HandStory should fire up. If this is the â??first run of the dayâ?• handStory should auto-

initiate a clip update. If not, it will just start up. Next, right-click on the â??KillHandStoryâ?• task and select â??Runâ?• and your HandStory process should be killed. (Note tat the icon may not immediatly disappear from the System Tray, so hover your mouse over it, and it should disappear. In any case, at this point, HandStory should no longer be running.)

So there you have it. Itâ??s a work-aroundâ?¦itâ??s kludgyâ?¦it requires you to jump through some hoopsâ?¦it still only updates once per dayâ?¦but it works!

Note; I successfully tested this using Windows 2000 and Windows XP Pro. I donâ??t have a Windows 98 installation, so the exact process may be slightly different. Please provide feedback if you have problems, suggestions, or corrections!

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