

INTRODUCTION TO CONSOLE

Console is a Windows console window enhancement. It was inspired by eConsole (<http://www.informatik.uni-frankfurt.de/~corion>)

Console features include:

- multiple tabs
- text editor-like text selection
- different background types (solid color, image, fake transparency)
- alpha and color-key transparency
- configurable font
- different window styles

NOTE: Console is **NOT** a shell. Therefore, it does not implement shell features like command-line completion, syntax coloring, command history, etc.

Console is simply a nice-looking front end for a shell of your choice (cmd.exe, 4NT, bash, etc.) Other command-line utilities can also be used as 'shells' by Console.

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Send bug reports, bug fixes, enhancements, requests, flames, etc., and I'll try to keep a version up to date. I can be reached as follows:

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Console program icon is Copyright (C) 2001-2011 Ante Vukorepa (orcinus@kset.org)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- [GNU GENERAL PUBLIC LICENSE](#)
 - - [Preamble](#)
 - [TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR COPYING, DISTRIBUTION AND MODIFICATION](#)
 - [How to Apply These Terms to Your New Programs](#)
-

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- Anduin Withers for fixed-pitch font dialog patch
- Kirill for many patches and bug fixes
- Jason Hood, creator of [AnsiCon](#) for the new inject code

Thanks also goes to all the people using and testing Console, reporting bugs and asking for new stuff :-)

RUNNING CONSOLE

Console setup creates shortcuts in the Start menu (Console group), on the desktop and in the quick launch bar. Any of these shortcuts will run Console with its default configuration, read from console.xml file located in Console program directory.

COMMAND LINE PARAMETERS

Console supports these command line parameters:

-c Specifies a configuration file.

<configuration file> **-w <main window title>**

Sets main window title. This option will override all other main window title settings (e.g. 'use tab titles' setting)

-t <tab name> Specifies a startup tab. **Tab must be defined in Console settings.**

-d <directory> Specifies a startup directory. If you want to parametrize startup dirs, you need to specify startup directory parameter as "%1\" (backslash is **outside** of the double quotes)

-r <command> Specifies a startup shell command.

-ts <sleep time in ms> Specifies sleep time between starting next tab if multiple -t's are specified.

Note: -t option is not used to set tab's title. It specifies one of the names of the tabs defined in Console settings.

Note: If you specify multiple -t options, you can specify multiple -d and -r options as well. In that case, each -t, -d and -r option will be grouped together. If there is no corresponding -d option for a -t option, the initial directory from that tab's settings will be used. For example:

```
Console.exe -t bash -d C:\WINDOWS -r "ls -al" -t cmd -d D:\ -t ncftp
```

Will start 'bash' tab in C:\WINDOWS, running "ls -al" command in it and 'cmd' tab in D:\. 'ncftp' tab will be started in the initial directory specified in its

settings.

Note: Some shells need an additional switch in the startup command string. E.g. when using cmd.exe, you must put /k at the beginning of your command string:

```
Console.exe -t cmd -r "/k dir /b"
```

Note: -ts option can be useful if you want to start multiple instances of a tab, and tab's shell needs write access to some files during initialization. Using -ts option, you can specify time to sleep between starting the next tab, giving each shell enough time to initialize itself.

MENUS

FILE

New Tab Submenu for opening new tabs.

Close Tab Closes currently active tab.

Exit Closes all tabs and exits Console.

EDIT

Copy Copies current selection.

Clear selection Clears current selection.

Paste Pastes text from clipboard.

Stop scrolling When a command produces a lot of output this action prevents the underlying console to scroll by switching to the Select mode. Hit Esc or Enter key to resume scrolling.

Rename Tab Renames current tab.

Settings... Opens the settings dialog.

VIEW

Console Window

Shows/hides the underlying Windows console window.

Menu

Shows/hides the menu bar.

Toolbar

Shows/hides the toolbar.

Status Bar

Shows/hides the status bar.

Tabs

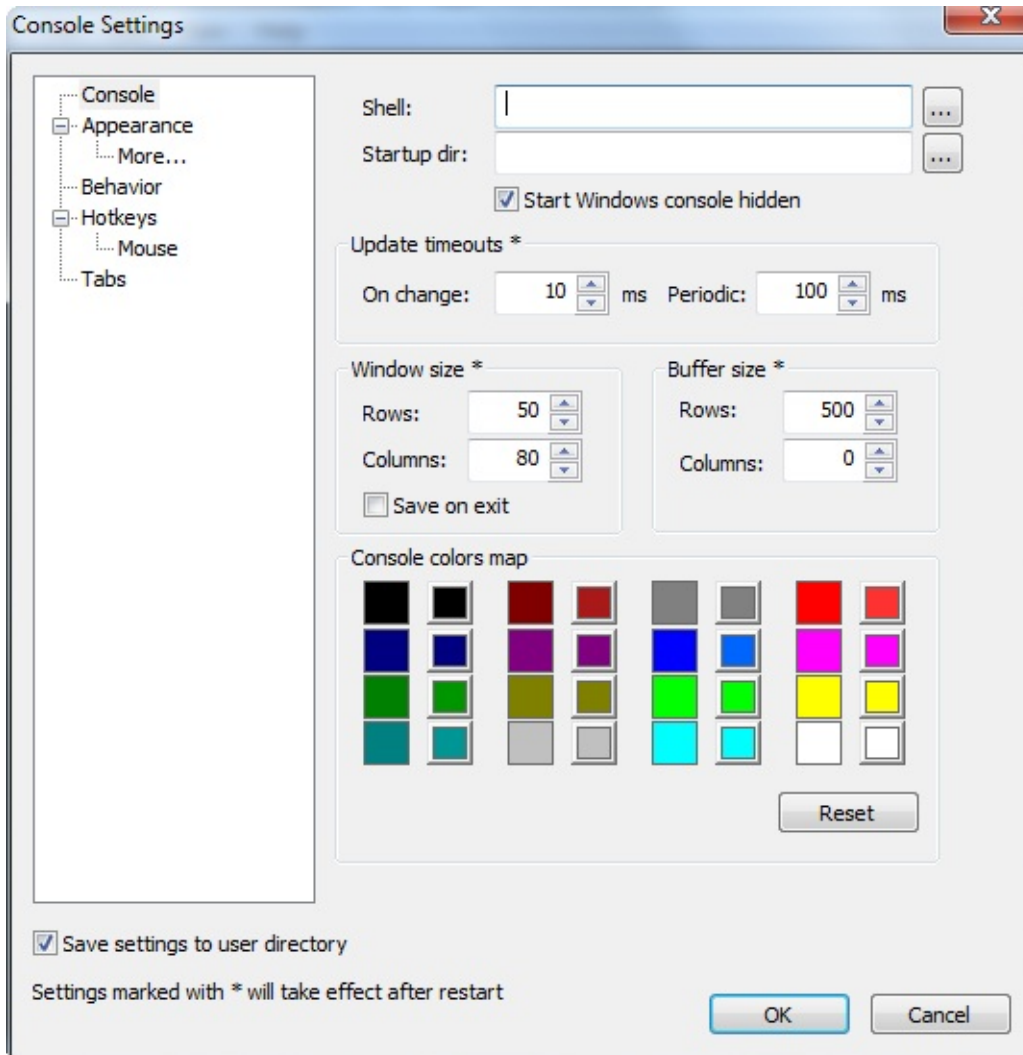
Shows/hides the tabs bar.

HELP

Help Shows help.

About Shows the about dialog.
Console...

SETTINGS - CONSOLE



Save settings to user directory

Settings are loaded from user directory by default. If no settings are found in user directory they are loaded from the Console directory. Setting are by default saved to where they have been loaded. If for rights reason this is not possible settings are saved to user directory. If "Save setting to user directory" is checked settings are saved to user directory in any cases.

SETTINGS - CONSOLE

Shell: ...

Startup dir: ...

Start Windows console hidden

Update timeouts *

On change: ms Periodic: ms

Window size *

Rows:

Columns:

Save on exit

Buffer size *

Rows:

Columns:

Console colors map

SHELL

- Shell** Specifies default shell command line. If empty, Console will use COMSPEC environment variable as default shell.
- Startup dir** Specifies default initial directory for shells.
- Start Windows console hidden** Launch the underlying console app hidden. It prevents a flick in the Windows Taskbar.
Warning: some console applications, e.g. PowerShell, that open GUI windows may not work correctly when this option is checked.

UPDATE TIMEOUTS

On change Update interval (in ms) after Console detects a change in the hidden console window. When a change is detected, Console will defer screen update for the specified interval. This is needed to improve performance during fast changes in the hidden console. Realistic values are 10-50.

Periodic Periodic update interval (in ms). This value specifies how often Console performs screen updates, even when there is no change detected. Console sometimes cannot detect changes in the hidden console window (usually by old DOS applications)
This value should be larger than 'On change' update interval. Realistic values are in the 50-500 range.

WINDOW SIZE

Rows Initial window row count.

Columns Initial window column count.

Save on exit If checked, Console's window size will be saved on exit.

BUFFER SIZE

Rows Initial buffer row count.

Columns Initial buffer column count.

CONSOLE COLORS MAP

These squares allow you to remap default 16 console colors. Left square shows the original color. Clicking on the right square will bring up a color picker allowing you to select a new color.

Reset button will reset colors to their default values.

SETTINGS - APPEARANCE

Title & icon

Title: Use tab titles

Use console window title *

Show command Show command in tabs

Trim tab titles to

characters with chars at the end

Icon: ...

Use tab icons

Font

Name: ... Size:

Bold Italic Smoothing:

Custom color:

Position

Initial position* X: Y: Save on exit

Snap to desktop edges Distance: pixels

Docking *: Z order:

TITLE & ICON

Title	Specifies the main window title.
Use tab titles	If checked, main window title will be set to the active tab's title.
Use console window title	Activates support for changing window/tab title from the shell ('title' command in cmd.exe). Note: If on, 'Rename Tab' menu command will not work properly.
Show command	If checked, main window title will show currently running command.
Show command in tabs	If checked, tab titles will show currently running commands.
Trim tab titles	If checked, tab titles will be trimmed to specified number of characters.
character width	Specify the maximum number of character of the tab name.
chars at end	Specify the number of characters to take from the end of the string. The total number will not exceed the character width .
Icon	Specifies custom icon for the main window. If left empty, default Console icon will be used.
Use tab icons	If checked, main window icon will be set to active tab's icon.

FONT

Name	Specifies Console font name.
Size	Specifies font size.
Bold	If checked, Console font will be bold.
Italic	If checked, Console font will be italic.
Custom color	Allows you to specify custom font color. Note: If on, all text will be shown in the selected color. Shell's syntax coloring will be ignored.

POSITION

- Initial position** When checked, allows you to specify initial window position. Otherwise, initial Console window position will be determined by Windows.
- X, Y** These values specify initial Console window position.
- Save on exit** If checked, Console's window position will be saved on exit.
- Snap to desktop edges** When checked, Console window will be snapped to desktop edges.
- Distance** Specifies window snap distance.

DOCKING

None Allows you to specify initial window docking type.

Top left

Top right

Bottom left

Bottom right

Z ORDER

Regular

Allows you to specify window Z order.

Always on top

Note: Pinned to desktop currently works only in Windows

**Always on
bottom**

Explorer (i.e. other shells like Litestep are not supported)

**Pinned to
desktop**

SETTINGS - APPEARANCE (MORE)

Controls <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Show <u>m</u>enu<input type="checkbox"/> Show <u>t</u>oolbar<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Show <u>s</u>tatus bar<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Show <u>t</u>abs<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hide single tab<input type="checkbox"/> Tabs on bottom *<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Show <u>s</u>crollbars<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Flat scrollbars	Styles <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>C</u>aption *<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>T</u>askbar button *<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>R</u>esizable *<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>T</u>ray icon<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>B</u>order *Inside <u>b</u>order: <input type="text" value="2"/>Selection <u>c</u>olgr: <input type="color"/>
Window transparency <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input checked="" type="radio"/> <u>N</u>one<input type="radio"/> <u>A</u>lpha<ul style="list-style-type: none">Active window: <input type="range" value="0"/>Inactive window: <input type="range" value="0"/><input type="radio"/> <u>C</u>olor <u>k</u>ey<ul style="list-style-type: none">Key colgr: <input type="color"/>	

CONTROLS

Show menu	Shows/hides main menu.
Show toolbar	Shows/hides toolbar.
Show status bar	Shows/hides status bar.
Show tabs	Shows/hides tabs bar.
Hide single tab	If checked, tabs bar will be hidden if there's only one tab active.
Tabs on bottom	If checked, tabs bar will appear at the bottom of the main window.
Show scrollbars	If checked, scrollbars will be shown if the underlying console shows them. If not checked, scrollbars will be always hidden.
Flat scrollbars	If checked, the style of the scrollbars will be flat if available.

STYLES

Caption	If checked, main window will have a title bar.
Resizable	If checked, main window will be resizable.
Border	If checked, main window will have a border.
Taskbar button	If checked, Console's taskbar button will be visible.
Tray icon	If checked, Console will show an icon in the tray bar.
Inside border	Specifies Console's inside (client area) border.
Selection color	Sets the background color of the selection. The foreground color will be affected by this color.

WINDOW TRANSPARENCY

None	Specifies transparency type.
Alpha	Alpha transparency is the 'real' transparency.
Color key	Color key transparency allows you to specify a single color that will be made transparent. All window pixels having this color will be transparent and mouse clicks will pass through transparent areas.
Active window	Specifies alpha transparency for while Console window is active.
Inactive window	Specifies alpha transparency for while Console window is not active.
Key color	Specifies transparency color for 'color key' transparency.

SETTINGS - BEHAVIOR

Copy & Paste

- Copy on select
- Don't wrap long lines
- Clear selection on copy
- Trim trailing spaces

Copy newline character

- Windows (CR+LF)
- Unix (LF)

Page Scrolling

- Scroll one screen
- Scroll rows

Inactive tab activity flash

- Flash inactive tabs
- Flashes:
- Leave highlighted

COPY & PASTE

- Copy on select** If checked, selected text will be copied and selection cleared after you finish selecting the text.
- Clear selection on copy** If checked, the selection will be cleared right after being copied. For example, if **Copy on select** is not checked, you would need to either press *Copy selection* hotkey or perform *Copy/clear selection* mouse action to copy the selection to the system clipboard. If this checkbox is checked then the selection will be cleared right after you perform one of those actions. Otherwise, you will need to press *Clear selection* hotkey or perform *Copy/clear selection* mouse action to return to the normal mode.
- Don't wrap long lines** If checked, long lines will not be wrapped. When a selected row doesn't end with a space, a line break will not be inserted before adding the next row.
- Trim trailing spaces** If checked, trailing spaces in each copied line will be deleted.

PAGE SCROLLING

Scroll one screen Allows you to specify how much Console will scroll when clicking scrollbars.

Scroll X rows *Scroll one screen* will scroll one page (current row or column count)
Scroll X rows will scroll Console window for the specified number of rows.

COPY NEW LINE CHARACTER

Windows (CR+LF) If selected the copy operation will convert the carriage return using the Windows convention.

Unix (LF) If selected the copy operation will convert the carriage return using the Unix convention.

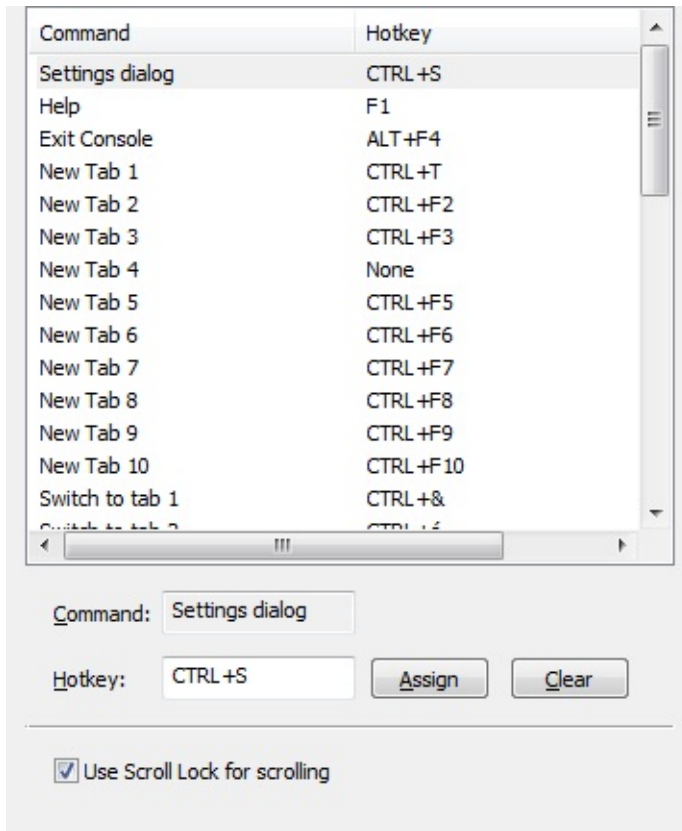
INACTIVE TAB ACTIVITY FLASH

Flash inactive tabs If checked, the inactive tabs flashes when some activities are detected in the corresponding console.

Falshes Indicate the number of times an inactive tab will flash when some activities are detected in the corresponding console.

Leave highlighted If checked, the inactive tab where some activities have been detected in the corresponding console will stay highlighted even if the activities have stopped.

SETTINGS - HOTKEYS



Command/Hotkey This list shows commands supported by Console.

To

change a command hotkey, select a command from the list and click in the *Hotkey* box. Then, press your hotkey combination (e.g. CTRL+4) and click *Assign* button. The command list will be updated.

To clear a hotkey command, click *Clear* button and then click *Assign* button.

Use Scroll Lock for scrolling

If checked, you can scroll Console window using the arrow and Page Up/Down keys when Scroll Lock is on.

SETTINGS - MOUSE

Command	Mouse action
Copy/clear selection	Left
Select text	Left
Paste text	Middle
Drag window	Left + Ctrl
Context menu	Right

Command:

Button:

Modifiers: Control Shift Alt

Command/Mouse action This list shows mouse commands supported by Console. To change a command mouse action, select a command from the list. Then, select a mouse button from the combo box and modifier keys (Ctrl, Shift, Alt). Click *Assign* button to assign mouse action to command.

To clear a mouse command, click *Clear* button and then click *Assign* button.

SETTINGS - TABS

Tab name	<input type="button" value="Add"/>
Console2	<input type="button" value="Delete"/>
	<input type="button" value="Move up"/>
	<input type="button" value="Move down"/>

Main	Background
Title & icon	
Title:	<input type="text" value="Console2"/>
Icon:	<input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="..."/> <input type="checkbox"/> Use default
Shell	
Shell:	<input type="text" value="cmd /k set inconsole=1"/> <input type="button" value="..."/>
Startup dir:	<input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="..."/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Run as user:	<input type="text"/>
Cursor	
Style:	<input type="text" value="XTerm"/> <input type="button" value="v"/>
Color:	<input type="text"/>

BUTTONS

Add

Delete

Move up

Move down

These buttons allow you to create/delete a new tab definition and to move tab definitions up/down the list.

TITLE & ICON

Title	Specifies tab title.
Icon	Specifies tab icon. If empty, the tab will use main window icon.
Use default	If checked, the default Console's icon will be used for this tab.

SHELL

Shell Specifies tab shell command line. If empty, the tab will use Console's default shell.

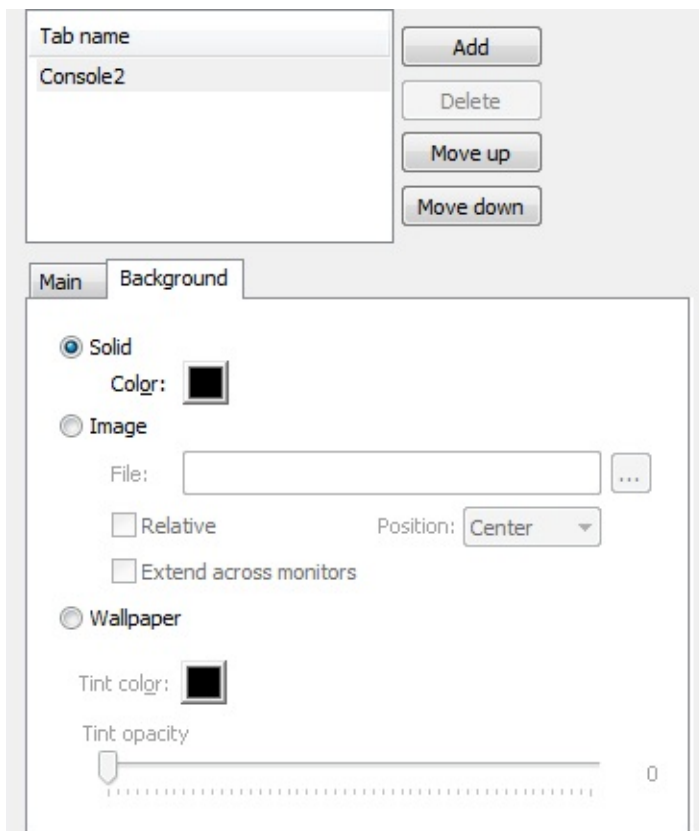
Startup dir Specifies tab's shell initial directory. If empty, Console's default initial directory will be used.

If the checkbox is checked, a dialog, asking for another user's credentials will be displayed. The dialog will be pre-populated with the given user name.

CURSOR

Style Select cursor style from the list.

Color Click on the square to select cursor color.



BACKGROUND

Solid	Select background type.
Image	<i>Solid</i> specifies a single color background.
Wallpaper	<i>Image</i> specifies a bitmap background. <i>Wallpaper</i> specifies that the desktop wallpaper will be used as the background image.
Color	Select color for solid background type.
File	Specifies background image file for image background type.
Relative	If checked, background image will be relative, i.e. when moving the window, it will appear that it's move above the background image.
Position	Select image position from the list. Background image can be centered, stretched or tiled
Extend across monitors	If checked, background image will centered/stretched/tiled across multiple monitors (if present)
Tint color	Select tint color for image and wallpaper background types.
Tint opacity	Set tint opacity for image and wallpaper background types.

LANGUAGE

Here's how to properly setup your language and font settings for Console.

Please read this carefully, especially if you're using double-width character languages. As far as I know, they're:

- Japanese Shift-JIS (codepage 932)
- Simplified Chinese GBK (codepage 936)
- Korean (codepage 949)
- Traditional Chinese Big5 (codepage 950)

So, to setup your language:

1. Start registry editor (Start->Run, type regedit). Find HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Console key. If there is a subkey named "Console2 command window", delete it.

NOTE: PLEASE be careful when deleting stuff from registry. You can break things.

2. Open Control Panel and run "Regional and Language options". Go to "Advanced" tab. In the "Language for non-Unicode programs" find your language. This is especially critical for double width character languages. Click OK. you may get a dialog saying that required files are already installed on the hard

disk. You can click 'yes' here to skip installing language files from a Windows CD/DVD. After that you will get 'restart computer' dialog. Click yes.

3. After restart, run Console. Unhide windows console (View->Console window) and open its properties dialog. Go to "Font" tab. Raster Fonts will be selected in the fonts list. Choose the other, TrueType font. For most languages, this will be Lucida Console. For double-width character languages, these should be proper fonts (I don't read Japanese/Chinese/Korean ideograms, I just read these from the registry :-)

- Japanese (932) - MS Gothic
- Simplified Chinese (936) - NSimSun
- Korean (949) - GulimChe
- Traditional Chinese (950) - MingLiU

Anyway, select proper TrueType console font and set its size to something small (8 or 10 points). Small size will allow you bigger max Console window size.

Click OK. "Apply Properties" dialog will appear, select "Save properties for future windows with same title" and click OK. This will save Windows console settings for Console. You can check your registry again, HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Console key. There

should be "Console2 command window" subkey there again.

4. You can now open Console settings and choose whatever fixed-width font you like (make sure it has characters you need :-)

Unfortunately, all of this is needed due to historic reasons: Windows console still uses codepages, and this seems to be the only way to set all of the options properly.

NOTE: I have noted that even Windows console shows some strange behavior with double-width character languages. As usual, if you notice something strange, unhide the hidden console window first and check what's happening there.

NOTE 2: When Console gets setup procedure, non-DBCS-language-users will not have to do this. Setup procedure will do this automagically. I will try to automate this for our Japanese/Chinese/Korean friends :-)

I hope I haven't forgotten anything... I tested this on Japanese Win2k and WinXP with East Asian Language support installed, so it should work.

OPENING TABS AS ANOTHER USER

If you configured a tab to run a shell as a different user, you will be asked for a username and password before opening a tab. To use a domain account, enter your username in the form *domain\username*

Running a shell as a different user has some limitations:

- User's HOME env. variable must be explicitly set
- If you're running 32-bit Console on 64-bit Windows and attempt to run cmd.exe as a shell, a 64-bit cmd.exe will be started and crash.
- Currently, other user's environment is not loaded and expanded. You can't use env. variables in the shell and startup directory parameters.
- As a consequence, if you leave the shell parameter empty, cmd.exe will be used as a shell, not other user's COMSPEC variable.

KNOWN BUGS & LIMITATIONS

These are things that do not work (yet :-)

- No maximize support. I'm still not completely happy with the code, so it's currently disabled.
- Running tabs under different credentials. I plan to support 'run as' for tabs, but it will have to wait for the next version.
- Full screen mode.
- Alpha transparency with desktop background doesn't work as expected. I don't know why this happens.
- There are several minor bugs and feature requests listed on project's Sourceforge [page](#). You can monitor their status there. I will try to fix/implement them as time permits...

REPORTING PROBLEMS

Half of the work in fixing a bug can be done by properly reporting it. Just creating a bug report and saying "This does not work" is clearly not good enough. When fixing bugs, most of my time is usually wasted on finding details for these bug reports.

Please follow these guidelines when reporting problems:

- Please use Console's SF bug reporting [page](#). Reporting bugs elsewhere (like the forum) is not a good idea, since they may get lost and forgotten.
- Write Console and Windows version you're using.
- Attach your configuration file.
- Attach screenshots if they illustrate your problem.
- If you can, describe in detail the symptoms and steps to reproduce them. If I can't reproduce the bug, it's usually very difficult to fix it.
- If Console output seems strange/garbled/broken, unhide the hidden console window (View->Console window). If its output looks the same, it's probably not a Console issue. Some console applications can behave strangely.
- Try to eliminate other utilities you run that could interfere with Console (hotkey managers, etc).

CHANGELOG

2.0

- Initial Console 2 release.