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Easy Process Hiding

Prove your stealth skills

Tiny or big, everybody has secrets. We are all trying to hide something we think might hurt at one point or another. Left unattended, opened documents or email accounts can bring us more harm than we can ever imagine. I guess what I am saying is that privacy is very important to each and everyone of us. Hide Wizard from Seapsoft seems to solve this problem because it is a tool that can hide processes, files and folders, opened windows or even those you minimized to taskbar while taking a break. Also, it is very helpful due to the support of mouse and keyboard hotkeys, which gives you the possibility to hide your game window from the evil eye of your boss. Being distributed as try-before-you-buy, you have 20 evaluation uses to make you decide whether this is the software you need or not. The installation process runs quite smoothly and doesn't take long. The application revealed it is quite easy to use if you spend about 10 minutes playing with it. The main window looks like the Task Manager you are used to in Windows, with some small exceptions. Is it actually a list with what you have in your taskbar - tabs and icons -, their state and full path. As a preview to what's to come, you can hide the windows you desire by modifying their state in the program. You can do the same with the icons in system tray. Try double-clicking one of them and see what's happening. Window's transparency can also be modified from application's main screen (from High to Opaque, there are 5 levels you can play with and see the effects). Having a look in the Settings menu things are looking difficult at the beginning. But it is not like that at all. First of all the Basic Settings sub-menu allows you to autostart the application with Windows - in case you don't want to do it manually - and to disable the Task Manager. Hiding the program itself requires activation of a code, and for this you need to purchase the product. Once you pay for it, all limitations are removed, and you get free technical support and free updates. Regarding the "hide the entire desktop", feature offered by the application, I couldn't find a proper usage for it, and here's why: if it's an office computer, you have your Windows login name and your password to use for your account. At home, well, I'm sure you can just hide the files if others are indiscreet but if they really need to use your computer they won't be pleased to find out the desktop gone seconds after logging in. Having HideWizard run in the background allows you to hide processes, specific files or folders. All the files having a certain extension can also be hidden at your command. Everything disappears with no visible trace and it can only be displayed again just via HideWizard, as a restart of the hidden program will not help you at all. Additionally, files and folders could be hidden without the application running. During my tests the most fun I had while playing with the Quick Hide tabs. Group A or Group B, they are basically the same; the single difference is the hotkey from the mouse checkbox. You can set your own keyboard shortcut to hide special programs or enter a part of the window title to be hidden on request. The sound can also be muted when all this is taking place. Process/File/Folder tab allows you to define the processes you want to be hidden while HideWizard is running. Folder names and filename extensions are also set up in this tab and they will be hidden at Windows' next startup or at Explorer's re-run. Another important feature is Virtual Desktop, which is a look-a-like copy of the default one. Combined with lock screen and password verification, it could be a handy tool in protecting the hidden files, folders, windows and processes from unauthorized view. The whole idea is once you tell HideWizard what to hide it will remain invisible in the default desktop but shown normally in the virtual one. To switch rapidly between them you can use the mouse buttons or a keyboard shortcut. Very peculiar (in the good way) is the fact that in Virtual Desktop mode Windows Task Manager is disabled, so nobody can see the applications you are actually running. As a particularity there are some programs like OpenOffice Writer, which do not open an instance in one of the two desktops available if it is already opened in the other one. During my tests on Windows XP there were features acting strange. For example, after having defined the files and folders I wanted the program to hide, on switching desktops I was surprised to see that sometimes the results were just half of what I was expecting. Interference with other programs is highly disregarded and I believe it is caused by Virtual Desktop mode. I think it is a good piece of software which went out on the market skipping some of the test phases. Improving the source code and releasing a new trial with all the features enabled would increase the value of the software and bring more benefits both

to the users and the developer. **The Good**HideWizard is a privacy protection application which can hide files, processes and windows. The interface is friendly and quite easy to use. Specific file types and folder names can be hidden if you don't want others to see them. Virtual desktop is useful especially when combined with screen lock. Can be of great help in case some of your work colleagues are a bit indiscreet. Window Transparency is a nice looking feature for people with an artistic view. The application can be manipulated via lots of shortcuts which are handy for power-users. **The Bad**The Help menu is not quite developed. Some of my questions remained un-answered and I wasn't even close to finding them in the FAQ sub-menu. With the program running, right clicking the HideWizard's taskbar window does not bring up any menu. Because it is a shareware version I couldn't figure out neither if the "Hide me when auto start", is actually working properly, nor if the password verification and the screen lock features do their job well. HideWizard may cause malfunction in running of other software. For unknown reasons sometimes it can remain on top of other applications unless minimized in the system tray and this can be annoying. The "Hide entire desktop X seconds after Windows login" feature isn't working. Certain applications once opened will run just in a single desktop (i.e. Mozilla Firefox version 2.0.0.12). **The Truth**Overall I can say it is a good product. As it is not a masterpiece in domain, I don't think the software's price/value ratio is the best you can find. Being a try-before-you-buy version I really thought I can test it with no limitations, but there are restrictions preventing the evaluation of all its features. It has some glitches and the program is interfering with other applications in an unwanted way. The price is moderate for a software of its kind. Except for a nag screen which appears from time to time and stays on top of the other applications, you can uninstall and reinstall the software and you will have another 20 uses in trial period. *Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*