4 Customizing

Introduction

You can alter some aspects of NCSA Mosaic's behavior and appearance to suit your needs and preferences. Among the features you can change are your home page, the default font, and the appearance of anchors.

Ways to Change Defaults

X Resources

Functional resources control the look and feel of NCSA Mosaic and provide it with some system-specific information. Visual resources mostly control the appearance of anchors (hyperlinks). Font resources define the default fonts NCSA Mosaic uses.

For information on X resources, link to the URL listed below:

`http://www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/SDG/Software/XMosaic/resources.html`

Command Line Flags

Command line flags are used to change various aspects of how NCSA Mosaic operates on your system. For example, you can use command line flags to tell NCSA Mosaic to use a color or monochrome user interface, change your home page, set your image cache size, or change the location of your global history file.

For information on command line flags, link to the URL listed below:

`http://www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/SDG/Software/XMosaic/command-line-flags.html`

Helper Applications

MIME Explained

How does Mosaic know that a GIF file is a GIF file and not a QuickTime movie or a plain text file? Usually, the server tells Mosaic the *MIME type* of the file it is sending. Originally, MIME—Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions—was just a method of including images, sounds and other non-text information in a mail message. MIME has now been incorporated into other systems such as the World Wide Web.

Based on a file's MIME type, Mosaic knows whether to handle the file itself (i.e., if it is an HTML file) or to pass it off to a *helper application* (also called an *external viewer* .

Some servers (e.g., FTP servers) do not use MIME types. In that case, Mosaic tries to infer the MIME type from the file extension. For example, a file ending in `.gif` is assumed to be a GIF file; one that ends in `.html` is assumed to be an HTML file.

You are able to modify the MIME types in the following ways:

- change which external viewer is used for a given MIME type
- define a new MIME type for a new file type
- add a new file extension and specify which MIME type it corresponds to

Multimedia Viewers

NCSA Mosaic attempts to use external programs to display files that it cannot display itself, such as image or audio files. If an appropriate external program cannot be located to handle the file, the **Save Binary File To Local Disk** window opens. Insert a filename to save the file for use outside of the NCSA Mosaic program.

NCSA Mosaic uses a two-step process to determine which external viewer to use:

1. The type of the incoming document is determined, either according to its file extension (e.g., `.gif` or `.au`) or as specified by the document's server. If NCSA Mosaic must rely on the file extension, a default list or a user-configurable file is used to determine type.
2. NCSA Mosaic matches the incoming file's type to an external viewer, according to either the default list or the user-configurable file.

For information on external viewers, link to the URL listed below:

`http://www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/SDG/Software/XMosaic/mailcap.html`

Mapping File Extensions to MIME Types

An extension map is a configuration file that maps file extensions to MIME types. For example, the file extension `.gif` maps to MIME type `image/gif` and the xv viewer.

For more information on file extension mapping, link to the URL listed below:

`http://www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/SDG/Software/XMosaic/extension-map.html`

Where to Obtain Software

See "Obtaining Software" on page C–1 for information on obtaining viewer software.

Changing Your Home Page

By default your home page is the NCSA Mosaic Home Page. If you want to change your home page permanently, you must modify your `.Xdefaults` file. You can change your home page on a session-only basis by including a command line flag in your start-up command (which can be included in a shell script). The third possibility is to use a UNIX environment variable.

You only need to use one option given here to change your home page. Refer to the URL below for information on how NCSA Mosaic processes the various options to determine your home page:

`http://www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/SDG/Software/XMosaic/specifying-home.html`

.Xdefaults File

To change your home page:

1. Go to the page that you want for your new home page and note the full URL.
2. Open your `.Xdefaults` file with your favorite editor.
3. Insert a new line with the following format:

`Mosaic*homeDocument:` *URL*

For example, to designate the NCSA Home Page as your new home page when you start NCSA Mosaic, enter the following in your `.Xdefaults` file:

```
Mosaic*homeDocument: http://www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/General/NCSAHome.html
```

Local Home Page

You can also create a personalized home page on your local hard disk. When you use a local home page, NCSA Mosaic starts up more quickly because it takes less time to read in a document from your hard disk than to download a file from a server.

To create and set up a local home page:

1. Create your home page. See *A Beginner's Guide to HTML* (**On HTML...** on the **Help** menu) for an introduction on creating HTML documents.
2. Note the URL for your home page.
3. Open your `.Xdefaults` with your favorite editor.
4. Insert the new line with the following format:

`Mosaic*homeDocument:` *URL*

Command Line Flag

The `-home` command line flag may be used to specify an alternate home document on a per-session basis by placing any URL after the `-home` flag. This line can be included in a shell script.

For example enter:

`%` **`Mosaic -home`** *http://www.univ.edu/welcome.html*

to have NCSA Mosaic retrieve the `welcome.html` document from the Web server named `www.univ.edu`.

Local Home Page

You can use a local document by entering:

`%` **`Mosaic -home`** */path/myhome.html*

WWW_HOME Environment Variable

The UNIX environment variable WWW_HOME can be used in place of the `homeDocument` resource in your `.Xdefaults` file. WWW_HOME overrides the command-line or `.Xdefaults` values.

Setting Home when Compiling

You can also set a new home page when you compile NCSA Mosaic. The top-level Mosaic Makefile lets you set the home document using the `customflags` variable. In the Customization flags section of the Makefile insert a URL by including:

```
customflags = -DHOME_PAGE_DEFAULT=\\\"URL \\\"
```

Changing Font Styles

You can change the font used in the Document View window by choosing **Fonts** from the **Options** menu. The font choices you have are shown in the secondary menu in regular, small, and large sizes. Experiment with the options and select the one you prefer.

This selection is for the life of your current session. New windows inherit the font and size from the original window.

Changing Your Default Font

You may want to change your font permanently. Make the change by adding a line to your `.Xdefaults` file.

If you want to experiment with fonts other than the ones included on the **Fonts** menu, enter **`xlsfonts`** at the system prompt to see what fonts are available on your system. Note the specific information for the font you like. To your `.Xdefaults` file add:

```
Mosaic*defaultFontChoice: "fontname "
```

For example, to change your default font to a Lucida Bright font add:

```
Mosaic*defaultFontChoice: "-b&h-lucidabright-medium-i-normal--12-120-75-75-p-67-iso8859-1"
```

Changing the Appearance of Anchors

To change the appearance of anchors, select **Anchor Underlines** from the **Options** menu. You have five choices: default, light, medium, heavy, and no underline. Experiment with the options and select the one you prefer.

To make a permanent change, modify your `.Xdefaults` file. For more information, see the URL:

```
http://www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/SDG/Software/XMosaic/resources.html
```

Creating a Configurable Documents Menu

NCSA Mosaic lets you create a **Document** menu, with the documents you specify displayed on the pull-down menu. For additional information on this option, link to the URL listed below:

```
http://www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/SDG/Software/XMosaic/faq-documents-menu.html
```

Executing Local Programs via Hyperlinks

Some NCSA Mosaic users want hyperlinks to execute a local program such as a shell script. There are security implications to local program execution that should be carefully considered before implementation. For information on this function, link to the URL listed below:

```
http://www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/SDG/Software/XMosaic/executing-shell-scripts.html
```