W10spk V2 Script Guide

Contents

W10spk V2 Script Guide

Important Information

The Windows 10 Fall Creators Update aka V1709 or Build 16299.19 has changed the nature of the Windows 10 bug seen with extended JRiver Media Center playback.
Any suspended Universal Windows Platform (UWP) apps, Edge browser and SystemSettings are no longer affected if they are suspended (minimized).
In some cases the bug appears to have disappeared completely and no longer affects the Start Menu or Search/Cortana. In other cases a much longer period between failure of either the Start Menu or Search has been seen.

During testing it was found that on some systems that still had failures, disabling the Visual Effect – 'Animations in the taskbar' and restarting prevented the loss of Start Menu even after very extended playback.

It is advisable before resorting to the use of this script on a scheduled interval that the above fix is tried, full details on how to disable the Visual Effect are shown below.

In the event that disabling the Visual Effect does not fix the bug on a particular system then running w10spk at a scheduled interval will fix it. W10spk is compatible with any Windows 10 version, the behavior of the script changes depending on the Windows 10 version it is run on. See W10spk Functional Description.

Disabling Visual Effect 'Animations in the taskbar'

It is important to note that the system must be restarted after disabling the Visual Effect (the Visual Effect is disabled immediately but the bug only disappears after a restart).

To disable the Visual Effect do the following:

From the Start Menu: Open Windows System >Control Panel

From Control Panel: Open System and then select Advanced System Settings

Revision 2-0
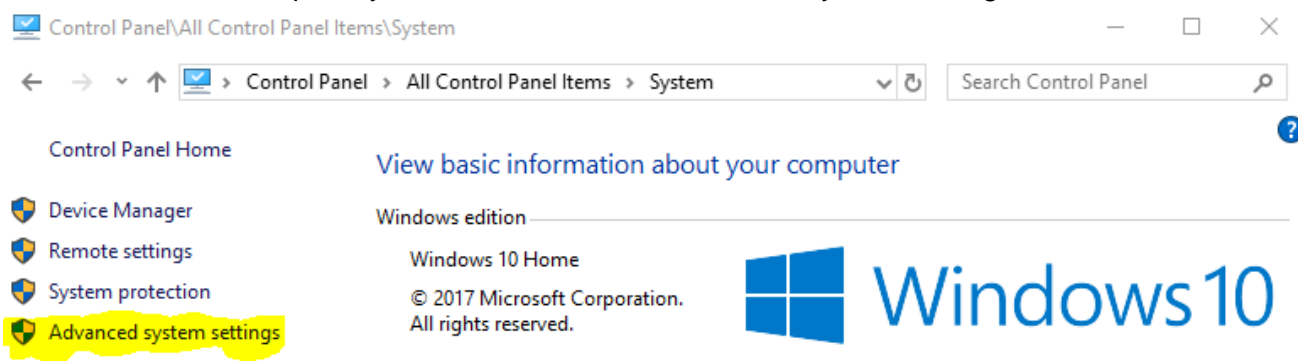
From the System Properties window select the Advanced tab
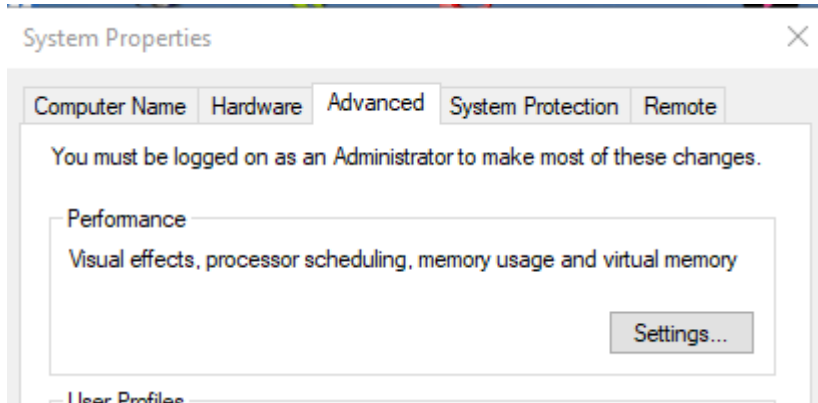
On the Advanced tab select Settings in Performance (Visual effects, processor scheduling etc)

Select the Visual Effects tab then select Custom and disable (untick)' Animations in the taskbar' (Most systems also have 'Save taskbar thumbnail previews' and 'Show shadows under mouse pointer' disabled as well)
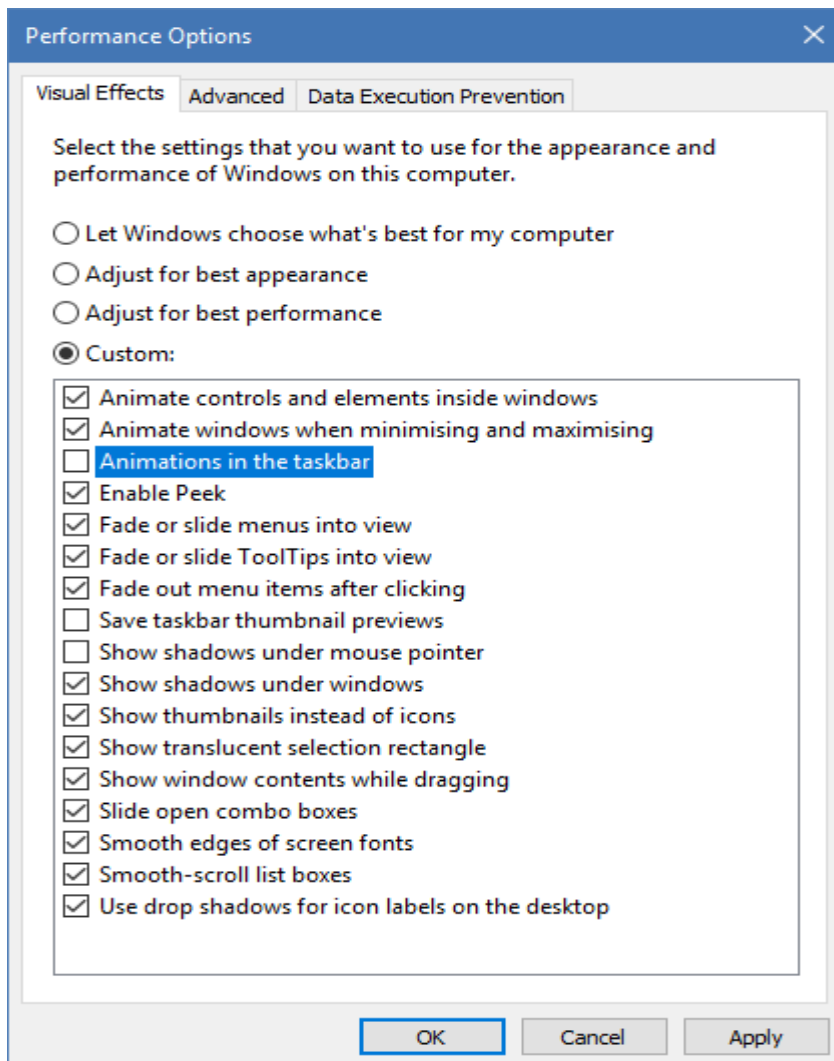
Click OK and then **RESTART** the system.

Revision 2-0

After completing the process described above, test by playing JRiver Media Center for an extended period (recommended 8 hours) and check the Start Menu and Search/Cortana open normally.

If the above does not work it is worth trying with most of the Visual Effects disabled to see if it resolves the bug for your system, a restart after changing settings is always advisable.

This Windows 10 bug is 'weird and wonderful' and can still appear at any time on any system (even just after a restart), sometimes the Start menu is OK but Search/Cortana will not open. Other applications besides JRiver Media Center can also cause the bug to appear, most notably the Steam gaming platform.

If you are having problems with only Search/Cortana then disabling Cortana can also be effective. Please use a search engine to find tutorials on how to disable Cortana.

It is advisable to create a desktop shortcut to allow a restart of the Start Menu and Search processes as this allows recovery of the Start Menu without needing to restart or sign out.

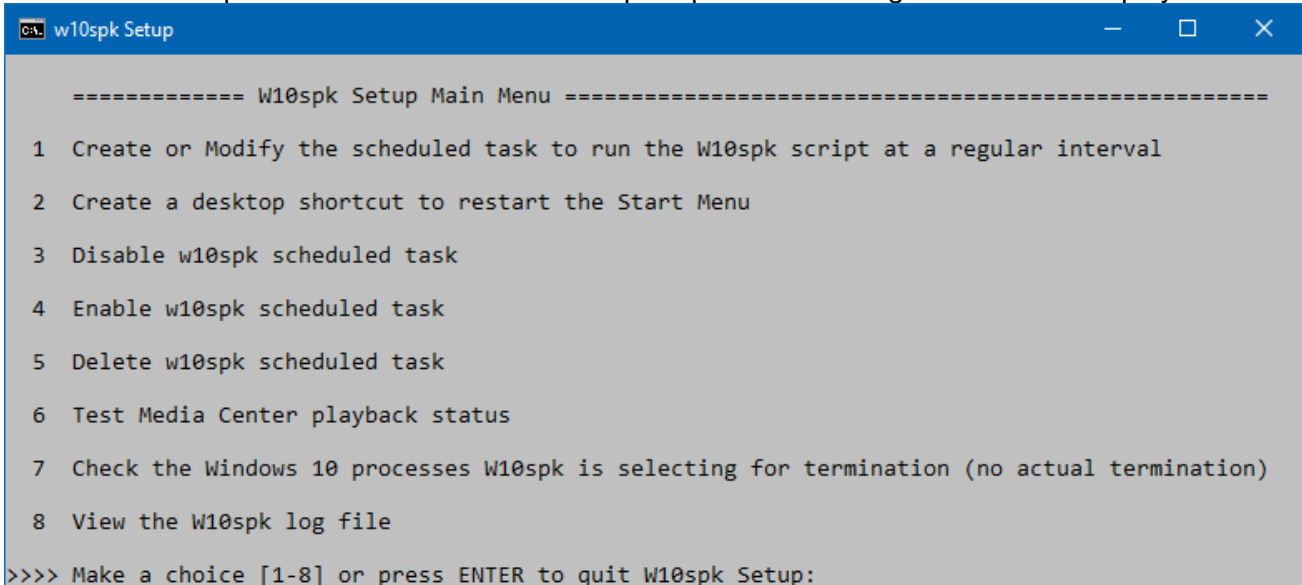**Please see [Quick Setup](#) for instructions.**

4

Quick Setup

The w10spk.vbs script is intended to be installed and administered using a menu based setup utility. Setup.cmd is a small Windows command procedure which is distributed with w10spk.vbs

Download w10spk.zip from the JRiver Interact forum, extract the files w10spk.vbs and setup.cmd to somewhere in your home directory:
For example C:\Users\<yourusername>\w10spkV2 or a folder called w10spkV2 in your Documents folder. The name of the folder does not matter, w10spkV2 is just an example.

Double-click setup.cmd or run from a command prompt. The following menu will be displayed:

```
  w10spk Setup                                                    —    □    ×

     ============= W10spk Setup Main Menu ======================================================

 1  Create or Modify the scheduled task to run the W10spk script at a regular interval

 2  Create a desktop shortcut to restart the Start Menu

 3  Disable w10spk scheduled task

 4  Enable w10spk scheduled task

 5  Delete w10spk scheduled task

 6  Test Media Center playback status

 7  Check the Windows 10 processes W10spk is selecting for termination (no actual termination)

 8  View the W10spk log file

>>>> Make a choice [1-8] or press ENTER to quit W10spk Setup:
```
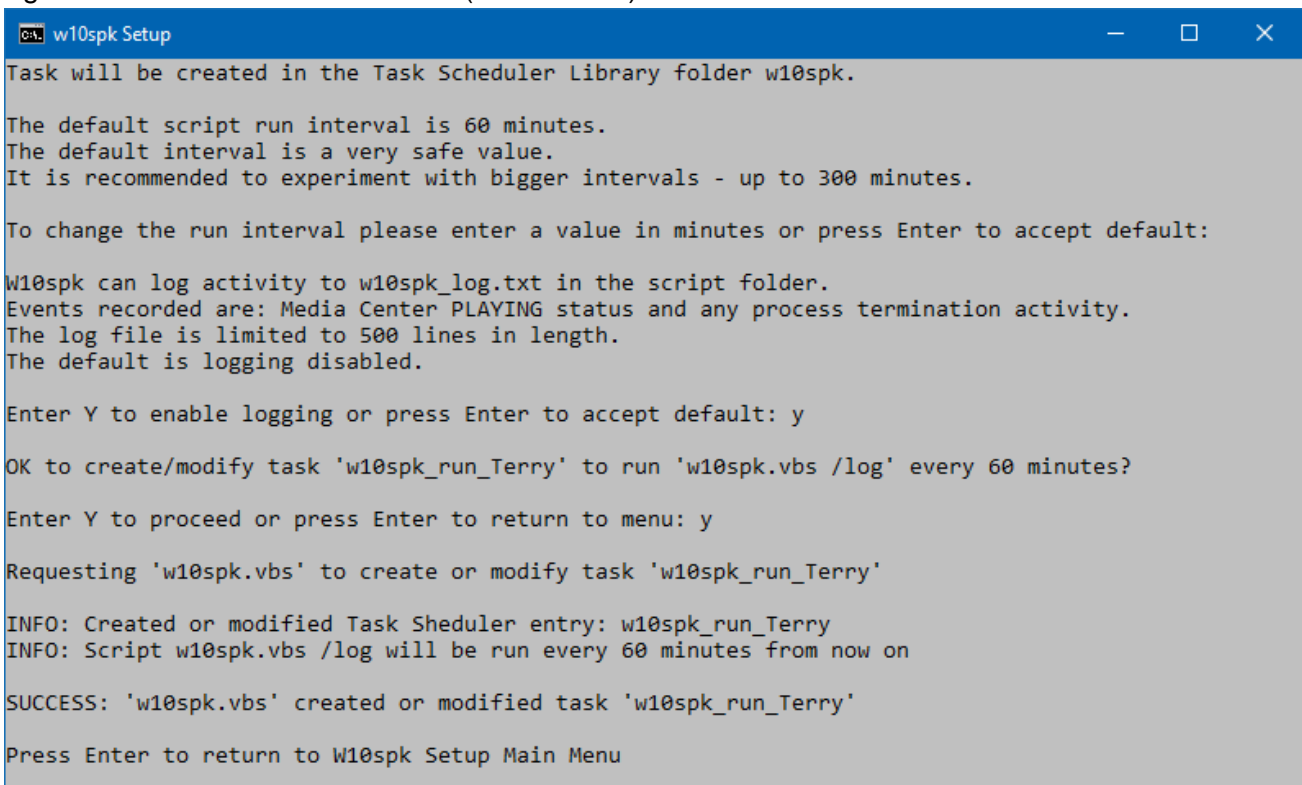
To run the script in scheduled mode, select choice 1 by entering 1 at the menu prompt.

The following example screen shows a task being created with the default task interval and activity log enabled for Windows 10 V1709 (Build 16299):

```
  w10spk Setup                                                    —    □    ×

Task will be created in the Task Scheduler Library folder w10spk.

The default script run interval is 60 minutes.
The default interval is a very safe value.
It is recommended to experiment with bigger intervals - up to 300 minutes.

To change the run interval please enter a value in minutes or press Enter to accept default:

W10spk can log activity to w10spk_log.txt in the script folder.
Events recorded are: Media Center PLAYING status and any process termination activity.
The log file is limited to 500 lines in length.
The default is logging disabled.

Enter Y to enable logging or press Enter to accept default: y

OK to create/modify task 'w10spk_run_Terry' to run 'w10spk.vbs /log' every 60 minutes?

Enter Y to proceed or press Enter to return to menu: y

Requesting 'w10spk.vbs' to create or modify task 'w10spk_run_Terry'

INFO: Created or modified Task Sheduler entry: w10spk_run_Terry
INFO: Script w10spk.vbs /log will be run every 60 minutes from now on

SUCCESS: 'w10spk.vbs' created or modified task 'w10spk_run_Terry'

Press Enter to return to W10spk Setup Main Menu
```
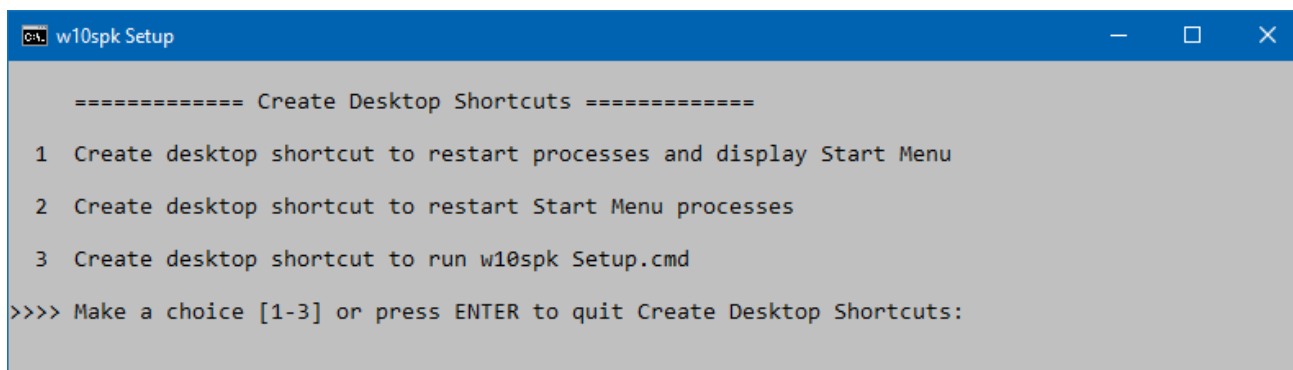
Revision 2-0

It is recommended to create a shortcut on the desktop to allow the recovery of the Start Menu or Search/Cortana if they fail.

Select Option 2 from Setup Main Menu, the following screen is displayed:

```
w10spk Setup                                                    —   □    ×

    ============= Create Desktop Shortcuts =============

 1  Create desktop shortcut to restart processes and display Start Menu

 2  Create desktop shortcut to restart Start Menu processes

 3  Create desktop shortcut to run w10spk Setup.cmd

>>>> Make a choice [1-3] or press ENTER to quit Create Desktop Shortcuts:
```
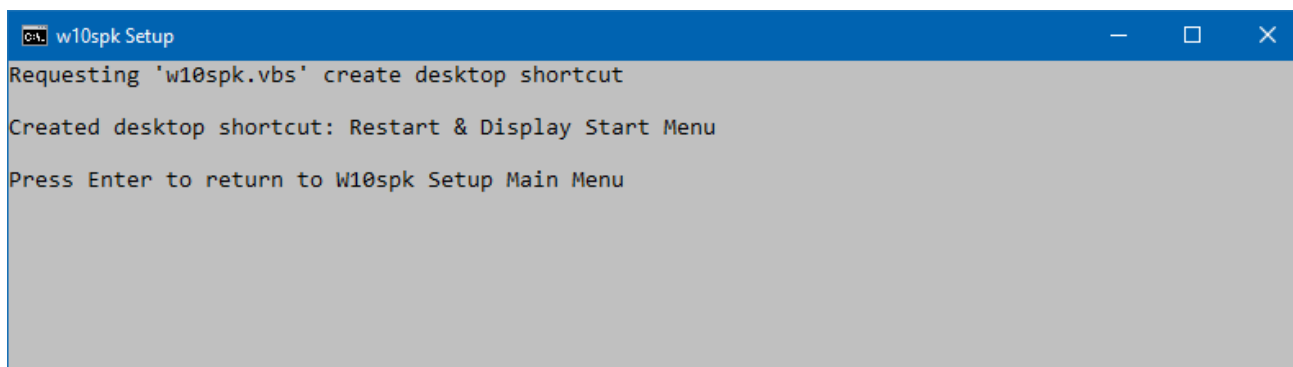
To create a shortcut that restarts the Start Menu processes and displays the Start Menu on completion, select Option 1 from the Create Desktop Shortcut sub-menu.

The following screen is displayed:

```
w10spk Setup                                                    —   □    ×
Requesting 'w10spk.vbs' create desktop shortcut

Created desktop shortcut: Restart & Display Start Menu

Press Enter to return to W10spk Setup Main Menu
```

A shortcut has now been created called Restart & Display Start Menu on the current users desktop.

To create a shortcut that restarts the Start Menu and Search processes only select Option 2.

To create a shortcut to run setup.cmd from the desktop select Option 3

That's it!

W10spk is now installed on the system, please read the rest of this guide for full information regarding the w10spk script. If you are using the script in scheduled mode on Windows 10 Version 1709 then please read the section: Process for optimizing task run interval on Windows 10 V1709.

For further information on using setup.cmd see: Using setup.cmd to administer w10spk

W10spk functional description

The w10spk Vbscript functions as follows depending on the Windows 10 Version in use:

When run from a scheduled task:

The script only terminates Windows processes if JRiver Media Center is actually playing on the local system.
The 'bug' does not occur if MC is open but not playing (e.g. importing, tagging, acting as Media Server etc).
This is scheduled mode and **PREVENTS** any failure of the Start Menu (if JRiver Media Center is installed and playing).

For Windows 10 version 1709 and later (build =>16299):

Stops the suspended Start Menu and Search/Cortana processes belonging to the user if JRiver Media Center (MC) is playing, the system then re-creates them.
UWP apps are unaffected by the 'bug' in version 1709 so no other suspended processes are terminated.
If the Start Menu suspended processes are terminated every 60-240 minutes this ensures the Start Menu/Cortana opens on first click.
There appears to be a very wide range possible for the interval between process terminations, the 60 minute default should work for all systems.
It is recommended to experiment to find the largest interval possible to minimize process terminations and still maintain functionality on a given system. See [here](#) for details.

For Windows 10 version 1703 and earlier (build <16299):

Stops **any** suspended Windows 10 process belonging to the user if JRiver Media Center (MC) is playing. If the processes are terminated every 15-40 minutes (default 30) this ensures the Start Menu, Settings and Universal Windows Platform (UWP) apps open on first click and do not crash.
PLEASE NOTE: Any MINIMIZED UWP APPs will be terminated!!!
Note: UWP apps include the Edge browser, Store, Calculator, Calendar, Weather etc.
If you are using JRiver MC for playback exceeding 40 minutes it is recommended NOT to MINIMIZE UWP apps.

When run from a desktop shortcut

The script can be run from a shortcut using the /restart (and optionally /popup) qualifiers.
This is restart mode and this **RESTARTS** the Start Menu/Search after a failure, this mode does not check the JRiver Media Center status at all. If /popup is specified the Start Menu will be displayed when the script completes. Example command line for shortcut is:
C:\Users\<yourusername>\<path to w10spk folder>\w10spk.vbs /restart /popup

Note: The Start Menu and Search processes are terminated by w10spk, the system re-creates them. See [Quick Setup](#) for how to create a shortcut using setup.cmd

For Windows 10 version 1709 and later:

RESTARTS the Start Menu and Search processes ShellExperienceHost and SearchUI (either running or suspended), no other processes are affected.

For Windows 10 version 1703 and earlier:

RESTARTS the Start Menu and Search processes ShellExperienceHost and SearchUI (either running or suspended) and **TERMINATES** any **suspended** UWP apps and system processes.
PLEASE NOTE: If you attempt to use a MINIMIZED UWP APP before executing the script then the app will **HANG**.

Revision 2-0

W10spk and JRiver Media Center Playback

In scheduled mode w10spk needs to detect when JRiver MC is playing. It uses the JRiver COM object to detect playback status. To check that w10spk is detecting the status correctly please run setup.cmd and select Option 5 'Test Media Center playback status'.

Please note that w10spk will function with ANY version of Media Center from MC12 onwards, 32 or 64 bit. If multiple versions are installed on a system w10spk will detect whichever version is playing. It is completely 'decoupled' from Media Center so if you are having issues with a particular MC build you can be sure it will have nothing to do with w10spk.

Using Setup.cmd to administer w10spk

Setup Menu options

Menu choice 1: Create or Modify a Task Scheduler Library entry....

Menu choice 1 creates (or modifies) an entry named w10spk_run_<yourusername> in the Windows Task Scheduler Library in a folder called w10spk.

The default run interval offered varies depending on the Windows 10 build installed (see w10spk functional description above).

To change the run interval enter a new time value (in minutes) at the prompt.

The task creation default is to set no script options (see W10spk options), the choice offered is to enable the /log option which can be useful for monitoring the script activity.

The option dialogue is shown in the Quick Setup.

Menu choice 2: Create Desktop Shortcuts

Creates a desktop shortcut for the current user to run the script in **restart** mode, this terminates the Start Menu processes and also optionally displays the Start Menu on completion.

Option 2 displays a sub-menu Create Desktop Shortcuts which gives a choice of shortcuts to be added to the desktop. A shortcut to run setup.cmd can also be created.

Please see Quick Setup for an example of the option dialogue and choices.

Menu choice 3: Disable w10spk scheduled task

Disables the existing w10spk task for the current user from running but retains it in the Task Scheduler library. Useful if you want to temporarily disable w10spk.

Menu Choice 4: Enable w10spk scheduled task

Enables an existing w10spk task for the current user and causes it to run immediately.

Menu choice 5: Delete w10spk scheduled task

Deletes an existing w10spk task for the current user and the w10spk task folder if it is empty, use this option to completely remove w10spk from a system. User confirmation is required before the task is deleted.

Menu choice 6: Test Media Center playback status

Display the current Media Center playback status.

Menu choice 7: Check the Windows 10 processes W10spk is selecting for termination...

Displays the processes w10spk would have terminated if it detected JRiver MC were playing. No processes are actually terminated by this test.

Menu choice 8: View the W10spk log file

This will display the log file if it exists.

8

Installing without using Setup.cmd

Of course if you are fully conversant with deploying scripts and programs using Task Scheduler, then simply create your own Task Scheduler entry.
If you do this then you will NOT be able to modify or delete the task using the script or setup.cmd.
Rather than create a task it is better to use the script to generate a task and then modify it.
To create a template task you can modify, run the following from a command window:
Cscript //nologo <path to script>\w10spk.vbs /x:20
Because the original task will have been created by the script, you can modify or delete it using the script or setup.cmd as well as Task Scheduler.

Process for optimizing task run interval on Windows 10 V1709

Introduction

The frequency of failure of the Start Menu or Cortana appears to be very variable on different systems running Windows 10 V1709 (Build 16299 and above). The default setting for the task run interval has been set at 60 minutes which should be a safe value for most systems however some systems may be able to have a higher value for the task run interval.

Why maximize the interval?

While every effort has been made with w10spk to minimize system loading when terminating the Start Menu processes (task runs at background priority, SearchUI is terminated first and allowed to recreate before terminating ShellExperienceHost) it is a disruptive process for the system and should be minimized as much as possible. If the processes are terminated too frequently they often do not re-create and this leads to a delay before the Start Menu opens when clicked.

Setting the task interval

First install and use setup.cmd to create a task to run w10spk using the default 60 minute run interval and create a desktop shortcut to restart the Start Menu as described in Quick Setup.

Playback through JRiver Media Center for at least 65 minutes **without** clicking on either the Start Menu or Search/Cortana during this period, then check that the Start Menu and Search open when clicked.

If they **do not** open OK then restart the Start Menu using the desktop shortcut and notify terrym@tassie on the Interact forum. You will need to set a task interval lower than the default.

If they do open OK, then run setup.cmd again and select Option 1. Set the run interval to 90 minutes and modify the task.

Set Media Center playing continuously for at least 95 minutes and again ensure the Start Menu and Search **are not clicked** during this time.

If the Start Menu/Search **opens OK** then repeat the process adding 30 minutes to the task interval and playback time until you get a failure of either the Start Menu or Search/Cortana. Once you have a failure restart the Start Menu using the desktop shortcut and set the task interval to the previous value that did not fail.

Revision 2-0

W10spk options (command line qualifiers)

w10spk.vbs /restart - recover the Start Menu using desktop shortcut

The script can be run from a shortcut using the /restart (and optionally /popup) qualifiers.
This is restart mode and this RECOVERS the Start Menu/Search after a failure, this mode does not check the JRiver Media Center status at all. Example command line:
C:\Users\<yourusername>\<path to w10spk folder>\w10spk.vbs /restart

Or use setup.cmd Main Menu Option 2>Create Desktop Shortcut Option 2

Note: The Start Menu and Search processes are terminated by w10spk, the system re-creates them.
For detail on the different actions for /restart depending on the Windows 10 version please see w10spk functional description

w10spk.vbs /restart /popup - recover and display the Start Menu

To recover the Start Menu and display it specify /restart and /popup on the command line of the shortcut. This terminates the Start Menu processes, waits for them to be recreated by the system and then sends a 'Windows key' ctrl-esc sequence to the desktop, this then displays the Start Menu.
Example command line:
C: \Users\<yourusername>\<path to w10spk folder>\w10spk.vbs /restart /popup

Or use setup.cmd Main Menu Option 2>Create Desktop Shortcut Option 1

Note: Using /popup from a command prompt will **NOT** display the Start Menu as the desktop does not have focus (as it does when running from a shortcut).

w10spk.vbs /nomc - recover Start Menu (deprecated use /restart instead)

Retained for backwards compatibility with w10spk V1, the same as /restart

w10spk.vbs /log - log to file (only suspended process termination activity)

In normal default usage w10spk runs silently with no output or user interaction, so how do you know it is working? Obviously the effects should be seen but if more information is required then w10spk offers a log option which records its activity. The log file w10spk_log.txt is created in the same folder as the script, if w10spk detects JRiver MC is in playback it writes a time stamped entry detailing the suspended processes that have been terminated. Log entries are written to the beginning of the log file and the log file is limited to 500 lines in length. Logging is enabled by specifying /log on the script command line.

w10spk.vbs /debuglog - log to file (all script output)

This writes a log file as described above but it creates a time stamped entry every time the script runs and records all script output (MC not open, MC not playing etc). Used for testing or debugging. Option is enabled by specifying /debuglog on the script command line.

w10spk.vbs /debug - open cscript console and view all script output

Opens the script using cscript rather than wscript (even if launched with wscript) and outputs all debug messages to the cscript console window, the console window is held open until user input at the end of the script. Only used for test purposes, option is enabled by specifying /debug on the command line. Usage is cscript //nologo w10spk.vbs /debug

Revision 2-0

w10spk.vbs /x:*n* - setup and testing options

Note: the following will run in a Cscript console window the same as /debug.

The following options are used primarily by Setup.cmd to setup and to test the script.

/x:1 Tests the current JRiver MC playback status and returns the following exit codes:
 3 - MC not open, 2 - Stopped, 1 - Paused, 0 - Playing

 /x:2 displays processes eligible for termination (no termination occurs)

/x:10 creates a desktop shortcut to run w10spk.vbs /restart

/X:11 creates a desktop shortcut to run w10spk.vbs /restart /popup

/X:12 creates a desktop shortcut to run setup.cmd

/x:20 creates Task Scheduler task entry for script with no logging

/x:21 creates Task Scheduler task entry for script with log to file enabled

/i:nn changes the task repeat interval (in minutes) for a task created by /x:20 or /x:21

Note: /i must be used with either /x:20 or /x:21

For example: /x:20 /i:250 creates a task with a repeat interval of 250 minutes

/x:30 disables w10spk task entry for the current user.

/x:31 enables w10spk task entry for the current user

/x:32 deletes w10spk task entry for the current user and the w10spk task folder if it is empty.