Dockhand For Windows 2.0 User's Guide

Welcome to Dockhand 2.0, a simple and convenient launching utility for Windows. This User's Guide will get you started right away with most of the features of the program.

Note: Some features described below do not work in the trial version of the software. See Section 8 of this guide for details about the differences between the trial version and the full version.

1. System Requirements

Dockhand requires Windows XP SP2 or later. The speech recognition feature requires an available speech recognizer.

2. Installation

Dockhand has no separate installation procedure. You may place the program file anywhere that is convenient for you.

3. Feature Overview

Dockhand includes the following major features:

1. You can define short text strings for often-used applications, documents, folders, and URLs, and then type that short string to quickly open the associated item, in conjunction with a hot key.

2. You can define a direct hot key for each individual item, allowing you to open that item with a single key combination.

3. You can assign to each item a speech recognition phrase, and be able to open the item by speaking. This feature requires that you install a speech recognition engine on your system, if necessary.

4. You can set an option that allows you to use Dockhand's launcher window as a quickly-accessible command-line processor.

Below are two screen shots that illustrate these features.

Figure 3.1: Dockhand Settings Window

In Figure 3.1, which shows the Dockhand settings window, the user has defined two "mappings," the first uses the shortcut string "ie" to launch Internet Explorer, and the second uses the string "mp" to launch Windows Media Player. Both entries also have a direct hot key. Pressing that key opens the associated target immediately.

Figure 3.2: Dockhand Launcher

In Figure 3.2, which shows the Dockhand launcher, the user has typed in "ie" to open Internet Explorer. Dockhand opens the target associated with the shortcut when you press Return. This launcher window is brought up through a user-defined hot key. Advanced users can also set an option so that what you enter in this window is run as command-line input.

4. Running and Configuring Dockhand

4.1 Starting Dockhand

To start Dockhand, double-click its icon. After starting up, it places a notification icon in the Windows status bar, as shown below. You can access all of Dockhand's features through this icon.
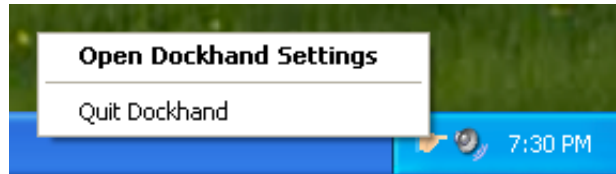

Figure 4.1: Dockhand status bar icon, and the menu it displays on right-click.

Before Dockhand can be used to launch targets, you need to add some mappings to its list. Right click the status icon and select "Open Dockhand Settings". This brings up the settings window that was shown in Figure 3.1. Initially, this window contains an empty list.

4.2 Adding Items by Drag-and-Drop

To add by drag-and-drop, simply drag one or more objects onto the list. This does not affect the original objects in any way; only their locations are added to the list.

Items that can be added are file system objects such as applications, documents, and folders, as well as URLs representing web addresses. No other objects are acceptable. When dragging multiple objects, if any one of them is not acceptable, the entire drag will not be accepted.

Dockhand does not allow duplicate targets. If you add a target that's already in the list, it is silently ignored.

4.3 Adding Items through the Shortcut Entry Dialog

Alternatively, you can click the "Add" button in the Settings window, which opens up the following shortcut entry dialog.
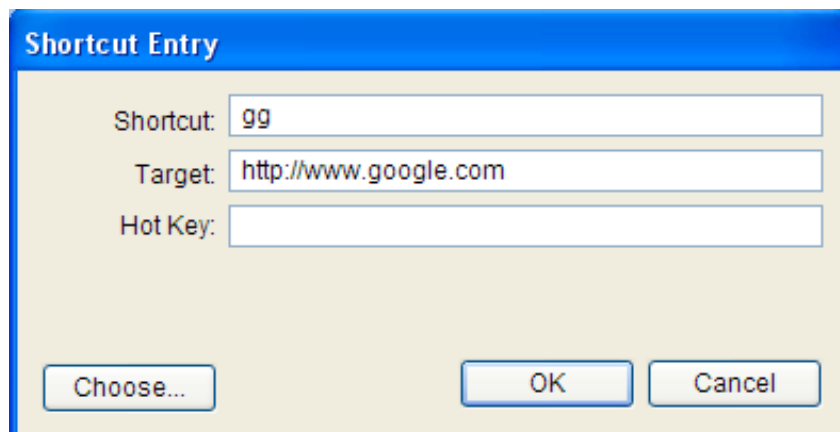

Figure 4.2: Shortcut Entry Dialog
This example shows a URL shortcut being added.

This dialog allows you to specify the target and its shortcut string. You can click the "Choose" button to visually select an object on the system. You can also specify a direct hot key for the item, one that opens the item immediately when pressed. (Hot-key entry is described further below.)

This same dialog is used when you edit an existing item. You can either select the item in the list and then click the "Edit" button, or simply double-click the item. Note that entries you add by drag-and-drop do not initially have a shortcut string or a hot key, so you will typically need to use this dialog to edit dragged items anyway.

Tip 4.1: Most user interface elements in Dockhand have keyboard shortcuts. You can find out what they are by holding down the Control key for about 2 seconds, until the shortcuts are displayed on screen.

4.4 Configuring Dockhand Hot Keys

To configure the main Dockhand hot keys, click the "Options" button in the Settings window, which brings up the following dialog.
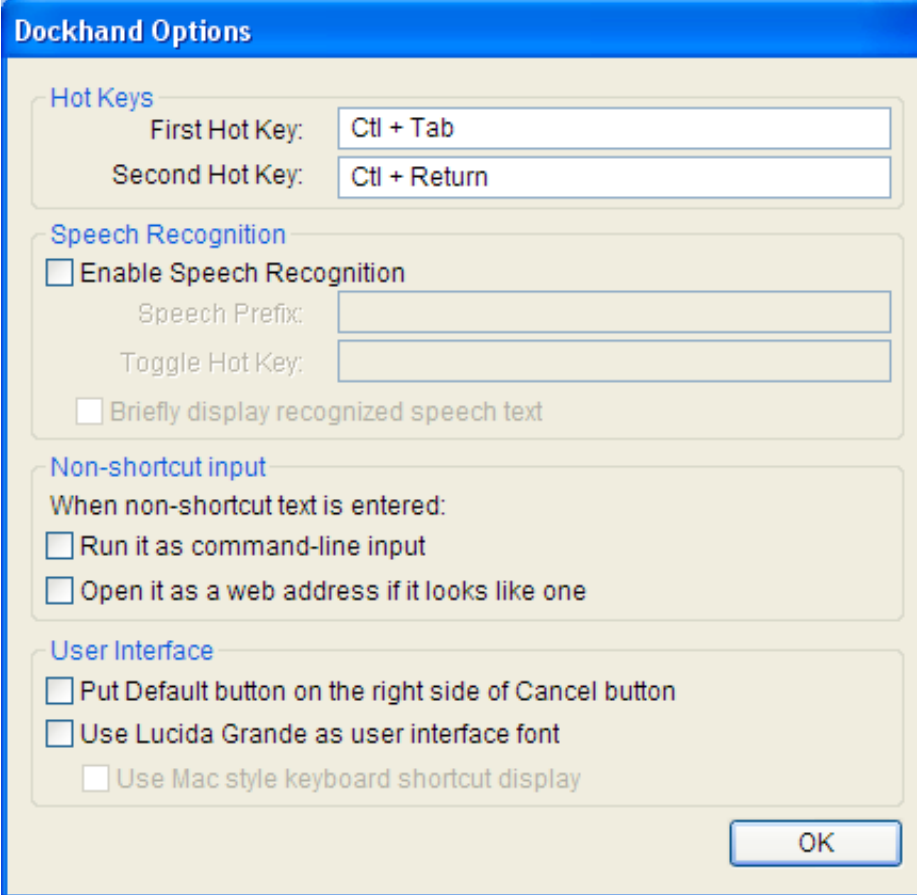

Figure 4.3: Dockhand Options Dialog
Refer back to this figure later when other options are discussed below.

The section labeled "Hot Keys" at the top of this dialog allows you to set up to two key combinations. To set a key, click in its entry field, and then type a keyboard combination that you would like to use. Some combinations are not valid and will be rejected when you attempt to enter them. You will hear a short beep when a rejection occurs.

You can also clear a hot key. To do this, simply type a Backspace in the key entry field, which leaves the entry field blank. A blank hot key field means that the key does not exist.

It is possible to set both of Dockhand's hot keys blank. When you do this, you must then resort to using the status bar icon to control Dockhand.

After installation, Dockhand sets these two hot keys to Control+Tab and Control+Return as shown in Figure 4.3. You can change them by following the above procedure.

Direct hot keys for individual shortcuts are entered the exact same way. You enter them in the Shortcut Entry dialog shown in Figure 4.2.

4.5 Using Dockhand Hot Keys

When you press a main Dockhand hot key (one of the two that you enter at the top of the Options dialog), the launcher window is displayed. An example launcher window was shown in Figure 3.2 above.

You can type a shortcut for an item and then hit Return. Doing this opens that item. You can also click the "Show" button to show the Settings window and reconfigure Dockhand.

Clicking the "Quit" button on the launcher quits Dockhand immediately.

To use a direct hot key that you defined for an individual item, simply press that key at any time.

> Tip 4.2: Dockhand's hot keys perform their assigned functions only when the Settings window is not shown. When it is shown, all of the hot keys simply bring the Settings window to front.

> Tip 4.3: Changes that you make to any of the hot keys do not take effect until you close the Settings window. It is also when the Settings window is closed that any changes to the shortcuts list and the program's options are permanently saved to disk.

5. Speech Recognition

Windows Vista Note

On Vista, unless you already use its built-in speech recognition, it is highly recommended that you do not use Dockhand's speech features. While it works, the interaction between it and Vista's own speech commands may be confusing, and Vista's built-in speech recognition features may be considered very intrusive by some. The other Dockhand features will work. In general we do not recommend using Vista.

5.1 Installing Speech Recognition on Windows XP

To use Dockhand's speech recognition feature on XP, your system needs to have a recognition engine installed. Open the Speech control panel and look for a tab labeled "Speech Recognition" as shown below.

Figure 5.1: Speech Recognition tab in the Speech control panel

(Windows Vista has a speech recognizer as part of the default installation, and also has a dedicated "Speech Recognition" control panel.)

If you do not have this tab, you do not have speech recognition installed on your system, and cannot use Dockhand's speech features.

If you have Office XP, read the following support article from Microsoft:

http://support.microsoft.com/kb/306901

Otherwise, if you really want to try speech recognition on XP, you can visit msdn.microsoft.com and search for "Speech SDK". An SDK is a "Software Development Kit", so if you install the SDK just for the recognizer, you are installing more than what you need. But this is one available option if you have no others.

5.2 Configuring Windows Speech Recognition

If you haven't already done so, you should configure the speech recognizer shown in Figure 5.1 by clicking the various buttons available in the tab, such as "Configure Microphone" and "Train Profile".

Accurate speech recognition requires that you customize the recognizer to your specific way of speaking. Doing this will greatly reduce mistaken recognitions that tend to make this feature frustrating rather than helpful.

5.3 Configuring Dockhand Speech Recognition

Dockhand checks for an available speech recognizer the first time you attempt to use its speech feature. If it cannot find one, it will briefly display an error message, and then disallow you to turn on the option again. If you install a recognizer afterwards, you will need to restart Dockhand for this change to be recognized. This is a rare case where the program does not detect a configuration change while running.

Turn on the "Enable Speech Recognition" checkbox in the Dockhand Options dialog to activate speech recognition. This will take effect after you close the Options dialog, not immediately.
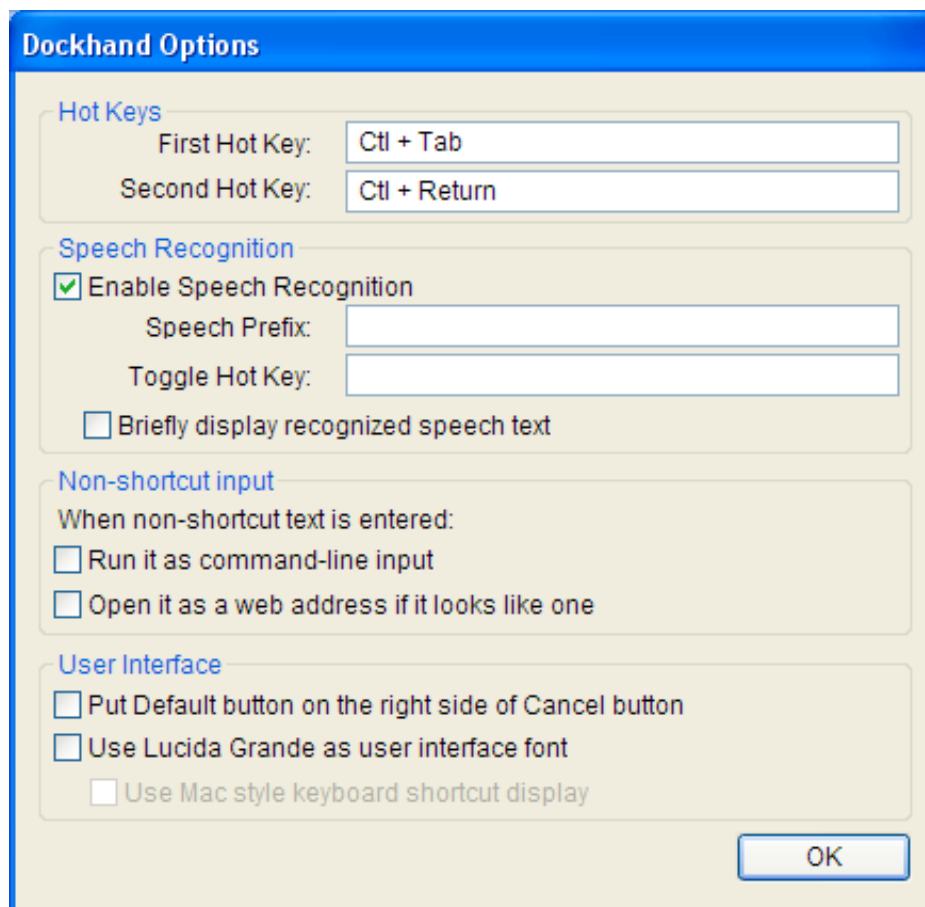

Figure 5.2: Dockhand Options window with speech recognition enabled

As you can see on the Options dialog, you have several further options relating to speech recognition.

5.3.1 Speech prefix

The speech prefix entry field allows you to specify a phrase that must be spoken before the phrase assigned to individual items. You can leave this field blank if you don't want a prefix.

For example, if you use "Open" as the prefix, and you assign the speech phrase "Internet Explorer" to

Internet Explorer (this procedure is described below), then you would have to say "Open Internet Explorer" to open Internet Explorer.

It is highly recommended that you assign a prefix, to reduce the number of false positive speech recognitions. You may need to experiment a bit to find both the optimal prefix and the best individual speech phrase for each item.

5.3.2 Speech recognition toggle hot key

You can specify a hot key that will suspend and resume speech recognition. This is very helpful when you use your computer in an environment where ambient sound may be mistaken for speech input.

If set, pressing this key acts as a toggle that will quickly suspend and resume speech recognition. You can, for example, suspend recognition most of the time, resume it only long enough to speak a command, and then suspend it again immediately.

The status bar icon reflects the current speech recognition state. Whenever Dockhand is listening for speech commands, a small microphone symbol is superimposed on the icon, as shown below.
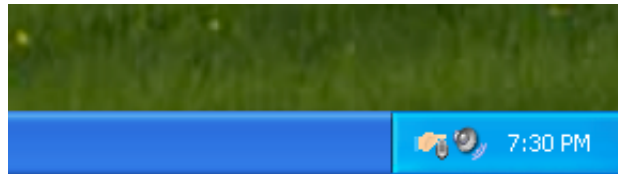

Figure 5.3: Dockhand status icon when listening for speech input

5.3.3 Briefly display recognized speech text

Turn on this option to briefly display recognized speech text as a visual feedback, whenever a successful recognition occurs. This display is placed over Dockhand's status bar icon.

5.4 Configuring Speech Text

After you turn on speech recognition and close the Options dialog, the shortcuts list will display a new column labeled "Speech", showing the speech phrase assigned to each item.

Figure 5.4: Dockhand Settings window with Speech column

To add a speech phrase to an item, double click it to bring up the Shortcut Entry dialog. When speech recognition is enabled, this dialog contains a Speech field as shown below. You enter the speech phrase in this field.

Figure 5.5: Shortcut Entry dialog with Speech field

5.5 Testing Speech Recognition

After you turn on speech recognition, and with the Settings window open, you can test your speech phrases by speaking them (preceded by the prefix if you have entered one). For each successfully recognized phrase, Dockhand highlights the corresponding item in its list.

Using this feature, you can test your speech phrases before using them to actually open targets.

5.6 Using Speech Recognition

The speech recognition feature comes into full effect after you close the Settings window and resume Dockhand's normal background operation. Simply speak the phrase that opens a particular target. If successfully recognized, that target will be opened.

6. User Interface Customization

On the Dockhand Options dialog, the section marked "User Interface" allows you to change Dockhand's appearance.

6.1 Put default button on the right side of Cancel button

On Windows, in dialogs that have a "Cancel" button and a default button (for example, one labeled "OK" or "Open"), the "Cancel" button is placed to the right of the default button.

Turn on this option if you want the default button to be placed to the right of the "Cancel" button instead. This is the Mac OS convention.
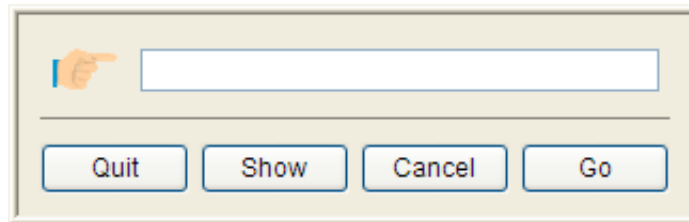

Figure 6.1: Dockhand Launcher with Go button to the right of Cancel button

6.2 Installing Lucida Grande Font

If the font Lucida Grande is available on your system, Dockhand will allow you to use it as its interface font. If you want to use the following two options, you will need to install this font first. As of this writing, the easiest way to obtain it for Windows is to download and install the Safari web browser:

http://www.apple.com/safari/download/

After installing Safari, open the Fonts control panel in Windows. On XP, select "Install New Font..." from the "File" menu. On Vista, right-click in a blank area of the control panel and select the same menu choice. Navigate to the "Safari.resources" folder within the Safari installation folder (which would be "C:\Program Files\Safari" if you used the default location). See Figure 6.2 below.

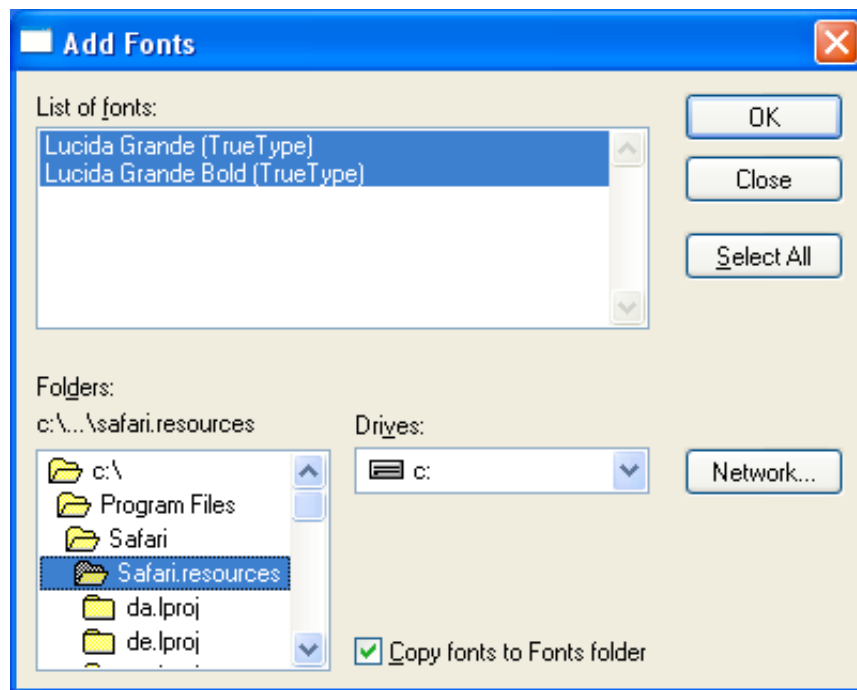Select the two Lucida Grande fonts in the list, and click the "OK" or "Install" button.

Figure 6.2: Installing Lucida Grande Font from Safari

6.3 Use Lucida Grande as user interface font

When Dockhand detects that Lucida Grande is available, it will allow you to select this checkbox in its Options dialog. The effect of turning this option on or off is immediate.
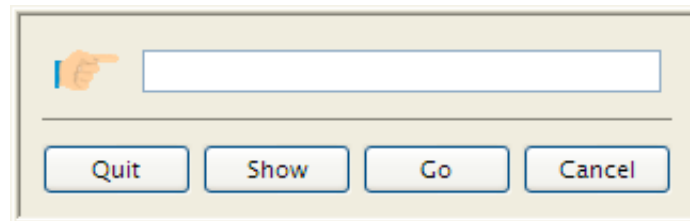

Figure 6.3: Dockhand Launcher using Lucida Grande Font

6.4 Use Mac style keyboard shortcut display

This option is only available if you are using Lucida Grande font. When turned on, Dockhand's user interface elements, when they display their keyboard equivalents after you hold down the Control key for 2 seconds, will use Mac-style keyboard shortcut symbols. A summary of these symbols is given in Table 6.1 below.

Note that these Mac-style symbols are only shown for Dockhand's own user interface elements. They are not used for hot key combinations that you enter.
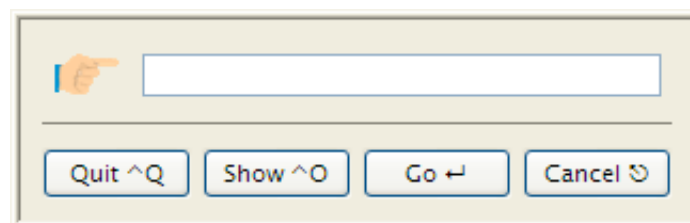

Figure 6.4: Dockhand Launcher showing Mac-style keyboard shortcuts

Table 6.1 Mac-Style Key Symbols

Symbol	Key
^	Control
⇧	Shift
↵	Return
↺	Escape
⌫	Backspace
⇥	Tab

7. Other Features

7.1 Adding Windows Shortcuts

Most Windows users are familiar with creating shortcuts of existing items. For example, you can right-click on an item and select an option that creates a shortcut to it directly on the Desktop.

When you create such a shortcut, what is created is a file that has a hidden extension of ".LNK". When you add such a shortcut to Dockhand, what is added is this ".LNK" file, and not the original object that it points to.

You can cause Dockhand to resolve a shortcut (instead of adding the ".LNK" file) by holding down the Control key when you:

- release the mouse button when dropping objects into the shortcut list.
- click the "Choose" button on the Shortcut Entry dialog.

However, depending on the shortcut involved, doing this may result in a Dockhand target that does not work. This is because some Windows shortcuts contain, in addition to the original object, command-line arguments that are passed to that object when it is run. Since Dockhand cannot handle this situation, only Windows shortcuts that contain nothing more than the path of an original can be successfully added this way.

While this is a limitation of Dockhand, it is one that can be trivially overcome, by adding the ".LNK" file rather than resolving to the original.

7.2 Non-shortcut processing

On the Options dialog, the section marked "Non-shortcut input" allows you to specify what extra processing should be performed when you enter text in the launcher window that is not a shortcut.

7.2.1 Run text as command line input

If you turn on this option, then Dockhand will take any non-shortcut text you enter and try to run it as if it were a command line entry. This is very useful to advanced users who would otherwise start a command prompt window. It turns the Dockhand launcher into a quickly-accessible command line.

If you turn on both this and the next option, the next option will only take effect if the entered text fails to run as command-line input.

(Note also that the Windows mechanism that processes command-line input also recognizes web addresses, such as www.example.com. If you turn this option on and leave the next one off, you will still be able to type in such web addresses directly to open them.)

7.2.2 Open text as web address

If you turn on this option, then any input that cannot be found as a shortcut (and that is unsuccessfully run as a command line if you also turned on the previous option) is examined to see if it looks like a web address. If so, Dockhand opens it as if it were a valid web address.

This feature is useful for fast typists who sometimes directly enter a web address by typing. When it is turned on, you can, for example, bring up the Dockhand launcher, type "www.google.com", and hit Return to visit the Google web site.

The way this works is that the text is matched against the following regular expression. Note that a string that matches this pattern is not necessarily a valid web address. If it is not, Windows fails when trying to open it. If the matching text does not begin with a scheme designation ("http://"), Dockhand adds it.

```
\..+\..+$|^https?://.+|\.html?$
```

This will match:

- Any string that ends with a period followed by some text followed by another period followed by some more text, e.g. a string such as "something.xxx.yyy".

- Any string starting with "http://" or "https://"

- Any string ending with ".htm" or ".html"

8. Software Registration

Dockhand is commercial software. When first run, it works in trial mode, with certain features disabled. You have 30 days to use the trial version before it expires. During this period you can, at any time, purchase a serial number to enable all features of the program.

8.1 Differences between the trial version and the full version

- The trial version will check only the first 20 items in the shortcuts list. This means the trial version has a maximum of 20 usable mappings, even though you can add more to the list.

- The trial version will periodically ask you whether you want to purchase the full version.

- The trial version quits by itself 6 hours after it starts.

- In the trial version, speech recognition will not actually launch the target associated with a recognized phrase.

- The option to run input as a command line is not honored by the trial version, even if that option is turned on.

- The keyboard shortcut for the Quit button in the Dockhand Launcher window, Control-Q, does not work in the trial version.

8.2 Purchasing a serial number

When using the trial version, you can purchase a serial number at any time by

1. clicking the About button in the Settings window and then

2. clicking the Registration button in the About dialog.

This brings up Dockhand's Registration window, which gives you complete control in managing the serial number, both before and after purchase. When you are running the trial version, this dialog appears as in Figure 8.1 below.

To purchase a new serial number, click the Buy Now button in this dialog, and follow the on-screen instructions. If you are interested in purchasing multiple copies, be sure to read Section 8.4 below before proceeding.

> Tip 8.1: Purchasing, activating, and deactivating the serial number take place through the Internet. Your computer must have a working Internet connection when the program performs these actions. If you have privacy concerns regarding any aspect of this process, please refer directly to our payment processor's web site at http://www.esellerate.net/papolicy.
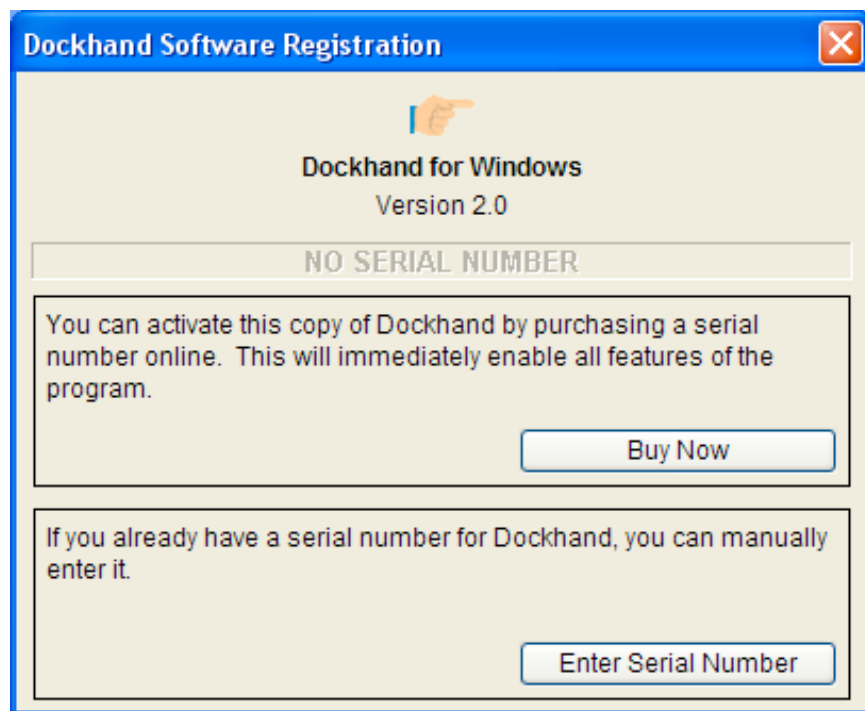
Figure 8.1: Dockhand Registration window in the trial version
Click "Buy Now" to purchase a new serial number

8.3 Activation and deactivation

After you make a purchase, you will receive a serial number. This serial number will be displayed immediately inside the Registration window after purchase. It will also be sent to you at the email address you used when making the purchase.

> Tip 8.2: **Be sure to guard your serial number carefully.** It is, in essence, what you paid for when you made your purchase. You should always keep a hard copy of it, separate from its electronic form, so that you can re-enter it if necessary.

Figure 8.2: Dockhand Registration window with activated serial number

The serial number allows you to activate Dockhand on a particular computer. When you make a purchase, the copy of Dockhand you are running at the time is automatically activated.

You can think of an activation as the right to use the program on one specific computer. If you use only a single computer, you generally need not worry about managing the activation, unless you change your system configuration significantly.

If you use multiple computers, you can move the activation from the computer where it currently exists to another computer by clicking the Deactivate button shown in Figure 8.2 above. You will then be able to activate Dockhand on another computer using the same serial number, by clicking the Enter Serial Number button.

> Tip 8.3: Deactivation is not instantaneous. You should wait several minutes before trying to activate on another computer.

Note that the serial number is case-sensitive, and you should enter it in its original form.

If you wish to use the program simultaneously on multiple computers, you can choose to purchase multiple copies. See Section 8.4 below.

> Tip 8.4: Even if you only use a single computer, before making any significant changes to its configuration, you should deactivate the serial number as described above.

8.4 Multiple copies

You have the option to purchase multiple copies of the program during the buying process. You will only receive a single serial number when you do this, but the number of copies purchased is encoded within the serial number as follows.

XXX**001**-XXXX-XXXX-XXXX-XXXX-XXXX

Figure 8.3: Number-of-copies indicator in the serial number
In this example the number of copies is one

Each copy you purchase entitles you to one activation. Therefore, you can use a multiple-copy serial number to simultaneously activate Dockhand on as many computers as the number of copies purchased.

8.5 Support

Registered customers are entitled to email-based support. If you encounter any problems with the program, send a request to windockhand@ed.com.