
Rainlendar 2.2 Review

Posted by engineer - 2007/01/08 00:53

I have been using Rainlendar 0.22 since it came out. I really enjoyed it and appreciated how it simplified and organized by days. I found about version 2.2 today and become excited about the new features it may hold. Perhaps I expected too much. Here are some of the problems I've encountered.

PROBLEMS

1. The learning curve:

Version 0.22 was quite easy to learn. I learned it quite well within minutes. Version 2.2 just takes way too long to adapt to. Too many features, lack of sufficient organization, and lack of customization than version 0.22.

2. Menus and access to Options:

There are only 2 ways to access the options - which tries to control every aspect of Rainlendar with a poor job. When right clicking on the Rainlendar to access the menus, it takes correct precision to get it. Double clicking to edit events can be a workout too.

3. Locking windows in place:

I liked being able to lock the positions of individual windows by simple right clicking on them like in 0.22. I hate going into the options and having to press OK.

4. Pressing OK for every single change in options!

This is very very very very annoying! I would like to see at least an "Apply" button, so we can see how our changes appear without closing the options dialog box.

5. Lack of customization:

I had to go to the Help file to find out how to apply various icons. But being version 2.2, I would think that they'd find some simpler way for users to customize rather than to edit the actual .xml file.

6. Options -> Skins -> Settings

This feature is quite impressive, I admit. But I wish the author could have given more control to the user. (e.g. deciding how many days should the Events List show) Also, this is a great place to put an "Apply" button so we can see our changes WITHOUT closing the options dialog box!

7. Scaling

Try to scale your Digiclock to 120%. What a mess! :sick:

8. System Resources

What in the world? Rainlendar hogs up 12.5Megs of system memory - more than MS Word and my firewall... :sick:

WHAT I LIKE SO FAR

1. The pop-up bubbles that come out when you hover over an event or to-do item.
2. The different calendar is clever, though it can be cleaned up a bit.
3. Easy to edit tables to change parameters like in Options -> Advanced

WHAT I LIKE TO SEE

1. "Apply" button to allow us to see our changes w/out having to close options box.
2. Simpler way to change font size, type, and color, as well as simpler way to apply icons to categories and event types.
3. Tutorial to produce our own skins and parameters.

RATING

Version 0.22: 3.5/5 :)

Version 2.2: 3/5 :unsure:

Post edited by: engineer, at: 2007/01/08 00:59

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Re:Rainlendar 2.2 Review

Posted by okh - 2007/01/08 06:44

Post edited by: engineer, at: 2007/01/08 00:59

This review calls for a second opinion.

PROBLEMS

1. The learning curve:
2. Menus and access to Options:
3. Locking windows in place:
4. Pressing OK for every single change in options!

I beg to differ. Rainlendar was up and running with several skins, reading all my existing calendars, in a matter of minutes. Basic customisation was easy. Fair enough, I did waste half a day messing with the skin, and still haven't got it quite right, but that is my problem, and the basics was easy. And my changes very COOL, with limited effort.

5. Lack of customization:.....

6. Options -> Skins -> Settings

This feature is quite impressive, I admit. But I wish the author could have given more control to the user. (e.g. deciding how many days should the Events List show) ...

One rarely sees software that allows for customisation to the extent that rainlendar does - in terms of interface. While it is true that one needs to dive into the .xml to make fundamental tweaks (and the whole thing can be quite confusing), it seems to me that the vast number of options are simply too complex to simplify. As for the number of days in the Events list - that is available from the options menu anyway.

7. Scaling

8. System Resources

What in the world? Rainlendar hogs up 12.5Megs of system memory - more than MS Word and my firewall... :sick: Resources could be an issue, haven't checked. Looked at my log, ini and skin file though, and the amounts of information read by Rainlendar is humongous. When I get time, I would like to make a very simplistic customisation to work from. I can spare 12,5 Meg as long as it isn't sluggish - and so far that has not been a problem, even with 7 different calendars. Sunbird on the other hand, allows for a coffee break trying to read the same files.

WHAT I LIKE SO FAR

WHAT I LIKE TO SEE

Yes, well, I also have things I like and things I might want changed. But my priorities would be different (as it would be for almost every user). Mine would be:

Copy tabular items from Manager,
Manager window that could also display in "normal month layout",
Someone to take the effort to make an ultra-simplistic skin,
An app that does the same for vCards that Rainlendar does for iCal (with support for GEO).

Trouble is that every user is different. All in all, I am amazed at how quickly Rainy implements design requests and bug fixes. Striking the balance of all different requests is an almost impossible task - and I cannot imagine doing it much better than how it is done now.

RATING

Version 0.22: 3.5/5 :)

Version 2.2: 3/5 :unsure:

Mine would be a 4,5+/5 on the same scale. On the plus side:

multiple environments (Linux/Win) and easy to use with other iCal apps,
amazing customisation - I have almost made my perfect interface,
fast compared to the competition,
simply very cool software with incredible user value,
and obviously, killer app freeware.

ok

Post edited by: okh, at: 2007/01/08 06:48

Post edited by: okh, at: 2007/01/08 06:54

Post edited by: okh, at: 2007/01/08 06:55

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Re:Rainlendar 2.2 Review

Posted by SirSmiley - 2007/01/23 00:37

Just a little nudge. Have to agree with okh on the review thing.

I do think you are off on the resource usage. I'm using a minimalistic skin & running at just over 6 meg's with the calendar, to do list, and event list open. Graphics are standard oem. To give an accurate comparison you'd need to say have three word documents open, etc. The more layers to be rendered obviously we increase the usage depending on your graphics card.

On an unrelated note.

I'm constantly running a .net app coming in between 600/900 kb's... I wouldn't have believed possible.

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Re:Rainlendar 2.2 Review

Posted by okh - 2007/01/24 11:44

Interesting about the resources - but my point was that I can live with it, after all a Meg ain't what it used to be - but as a general rule I agree that lean/mean is better . Just out of curiosity, which minimalist skin are you using? Something you can share to save me the trouble of starting afresh...?

ok

On an equally unrelated note: looking at the mem-usage on my laptop is pretty depressing. Time for a general clean-up - Rainlendar not on the purge list - after all it is working hard for its space. Sunbird is sucking up nearly 40 Meg with my calendars - easy choice.

Post edited by: okh, at: 2007/01/24 11:48

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Re:Rainlendar 2.2 Review

Posted by SirSmiley - 2007/01/25 18:25

:) Funny how the resource thing worries people still. Standard systems come with more than most people will ever use.

My skin is a wip. Basically I extracked the darkness skin to a folder, changed over to text instead of images & got rid of all the images and files I don't use.

Once you get the hang of it it is actually quite simple.

I'm thinking of creating a skin maker as DesktopX Gadget but, not to familiar with MS dom.

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Re:Rainlendar 2.2 Review

Posted by tombik - 2007/01/28 03:34

I also want to enunciate my opinion about RL 2:

I was and I am a heavy user of RL 0.22, building own skins etc..after installing 2.0 and after wandering around the menus and options etc for 20 minutes it was totally clear that I will never upgrade. No logic, no intuition, I was getting angry. Sorry for that hard words but that was my impression.

Big thanks for the old version and I will give support to all my buddies if they have any problems, but V2.0: no way!

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Re:Rainlendar 2.2 Review

Posted by fulanito - 2007/01/29 01:46

As a former 0.22 user, I can understand some of the frustration in this thread. I have to disagree with the 'less intuitive'

remark however. I find the options to be far more polished, and I love the tabbed icon interface. What I miss, and may eventually become the deal-breaker for me, is the inability to customize event categories easily from within said options menu. Otherwise the 'Task Manager' and 'Options' facelift are welcome additions (thanks Rainy).

Re:Rainlendar 2.2 Review

Posted by he_the_great - 2007/01/29 03:51

I used .22 and I ran through customizations, and I've been doing the same with 2.0. And I will say this .22 was not user friendly, it was a trick to customize and version 2 follows in the same path. I think 2.0 is more intuitive and the options are better organized. However, its not customized like its predecessor, and that is where I think people are seeing problems. v.22 had curtain customizations easier, but v2 makes other easier and provides a greater amount.

Its a matter of leaning the new quirks, everyone already did with v.22 but that does not make v2 worse. (v2 works in Linux unlike .22)

Re:Rainlendar 2.2 Review

Posted by BobOwen1 - 2007/03/23 19:07

If you make a Gadget, let me know where to download it from....

Re:Rainlendar 2.2 Review

Posted by BobOwen1 - 2007/03/23 19:09

I agree...having Windows Vista I can appreciate the changes. Now if someone could just make a skinning guide for this version:)