DCSTOOLS.COM

Tools for Radio

dcsTools Ini Editor

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dcsTools Ini Editor

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Publisher

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Introduction

Part I

dcsTools Ini Editor is an application for viewing and editing of traditional ini (initialization) files. These files are most often used to store a software program's settings. Registration information, default file locations and application characteristics are common examples of information stored in ini files.

dcsTools Ini Editor was created to make navigating and understanding the hierarchy of ini files easier. Each section is displayed, with its associated key values shown as children of the section. Sections and keys can be sorted for ease in finding particular items. Key values can be shown or hidden on-demand, making it easier to locate a particular section of an ini file.

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Document Conventions

The following table describes important conventions used in the dcsTools Ini Editor documentation

Convention	***Description***
menu | menu command	Describes a menu item followed by a menu command.
[**button or mouse**]	Text between square brackets refers to a keystroke, i.e. [**F10**], button, i.e. [**Save**], or mouse click, i.e. [**Left-Click**].
	Signifies important information that may have an impact on operation of the software.
	Signifies an informational note on using the software more efficiently or things that may affect operation of the software.
	Signifies a hint that may be useful when using or setting up the software.

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1.1 What's New in this Release

This section documents changes and enhancements to dcsTools Ini Editor by version number.

Version 1.9.0.80 - 04/05/2023

1. **IMPORTANT COMING CHANGE**. This the last version of dcsTools Ini Editor that will support Windows 2000. Future revisions will no longer support Windows 2000.
2. **Enhancement**. Support for Windows 11 has been added.

Version 1.8.0.75 - 05/05/2020

1. **Change**. Support for operating systems released prior to Windows 2000 has been dropped. In order to use dcsTools Ini Editor, the host operating system must be Windows 2000 or later.

1.2 Warranty & License Agreement

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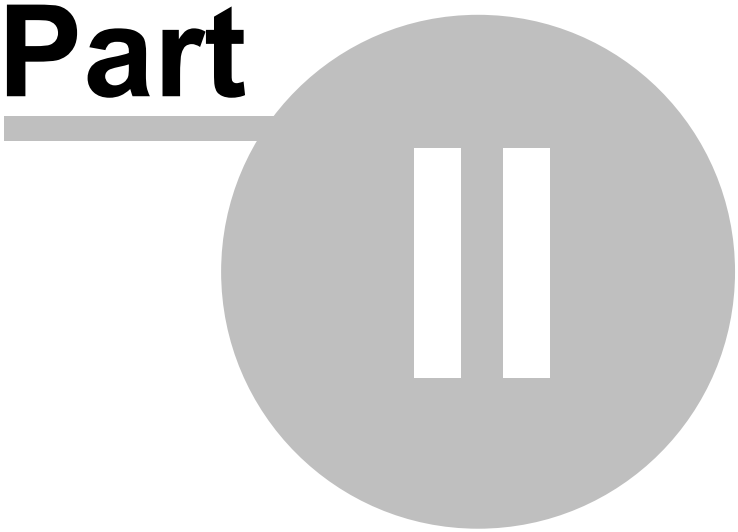
System Requirements & Installation



dcsTools Ini Editor requires certain hardware and Windows operating system minimums. You must also install the dcsTools Ini Editor software on the PC using an installation program.

This section documents the system requirements for dcsTools Ini Editor and covers the process of installing, updating and removing the dcsTools Ini Editor software.

2.1 Hardware Requirements

The base hardware and operating system requirements to run dcsTools Ini Editor include:

Operating System	Windows 2000 or later.
CPU Speed	1 GHz or greater.
RAM Memory	64 MB RAM (Windows 2000), 128 MB RAM (Windows XP), 1 GB RAM (Windows Vista and later).
Display	A minimum of 800 x 600 resolution, 1024 x 768 or greater is highly recommended.
Hard Disk Space	~8 MB free disk space (for this application only).
Network Connection	If files are to be viewed or edited either on another PC, a working network connection to that PC is required.

2.2 Installation & Updating

The installation program provides step-by-step instructions on every screen displayed during the installation. Follow the instructions on each screen to install this software.

Before you install

1. Close all other programs, including any anti-virus programs.
2. Log on to your computer with administrator privileges.

You must have administrator privileges to perform an installation or a software update on any of the supported Windows operating systems.

Installing dcsTools Ini Editor

dcsTools Ini Editor is distributed as a download-able installation program. The latest version of the software is always available on our web site.

1. After you have downloaded the installation program to your computer, locate the setup program in the folder to which you downloaded the file. If you downloaded

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the dcsTools Utilities package, the file name will be **dcsToolsUtilsSetup.exe**. Double-click on the setup program to begin installation.

2. Follow the instructions on each screen to install the software.

Updating dcsTools Ini Editor

1. If you have downloaded or otherwise received a revision for dcsTools Ini Editor, the process for updating the software is virtually identical to the initial installation. However, the installation dialogs may be a bit different. When updating, you are not typically given an opportunity to select the target folder for installation, as that choice has already been made in a previous installation.
2. On occasion, updating dcsTools Ini Editor may require some additional tasks be performed during the update. Such tasks might include making adjustments to your preferences settings or removing files no longer needed. If these tasks are needed, you will be prompted for any input required and notified if the update task could not be completed successfully.

You must have administrator privileges to perform an installation or a software update on any of the supported Windows operating systems.

To Uninstall dcsTools Ini Editor

To remove this software from your PC, select the Control Panel applet Add/Remove Programs. Select **dcsTools Utilities** and click on the [**Remove**] button. Follow the prompts to uninstall the software.

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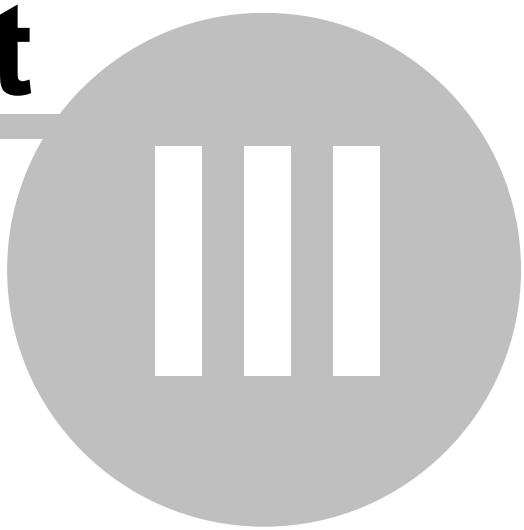
Using dcsTools Ini Editor

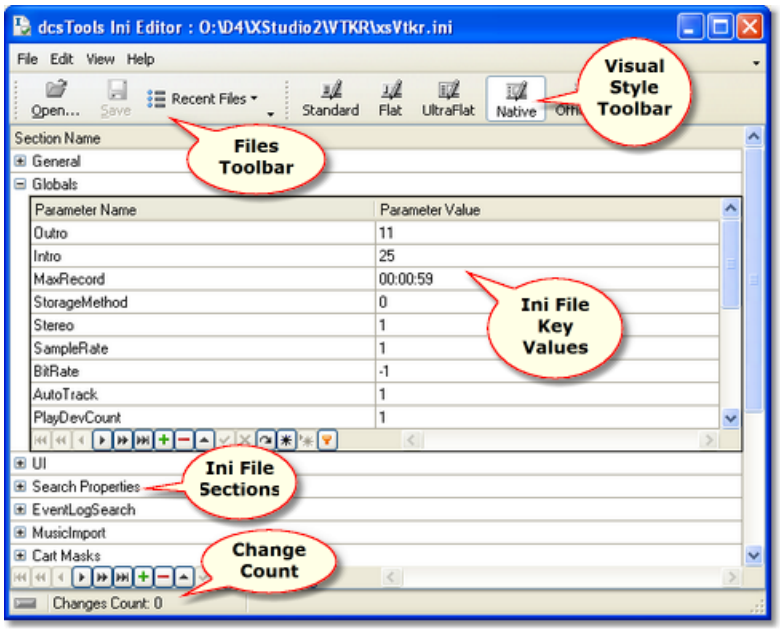
Part



This section covers day-to-day usage of dcsTools Ini Editor. Once you have installed the software, launch dcsTools Ini Editor, either from a desktop shortcut or from the Programs menu. There is nothing to configure to get started.

To open an ini file, click on the **File | Open** menu item or the [**Open**] button. A dialog is displayed, allowing you to choose the file you wish to examine or modify.

The dcsTools Ini Editor User Interface



dcsTools Ini Editor Main Display

The main display consists of the main menu, tool bars for common tasks and the data display table. The tool bars can be moved around on the display and even floated off the display, if desired. Tool bar positions are saved on program exit and restored the next time dcsTools Ini Editor is launched.

3.1 Opening Files

To open an ini file, use either the main menu item **File | Open** or click on the toolbar [**Open...**] button, as shown.

A dialog is displayed for navigating to the correct folder and selecting the file to open. As each file is opened, it is added to the "Recent Files" list. The last 10 files opened are kept in the list and any one of them can later be re-opened by clicking on the [**Recent Files**] button and selecting the file from the list, as shown.

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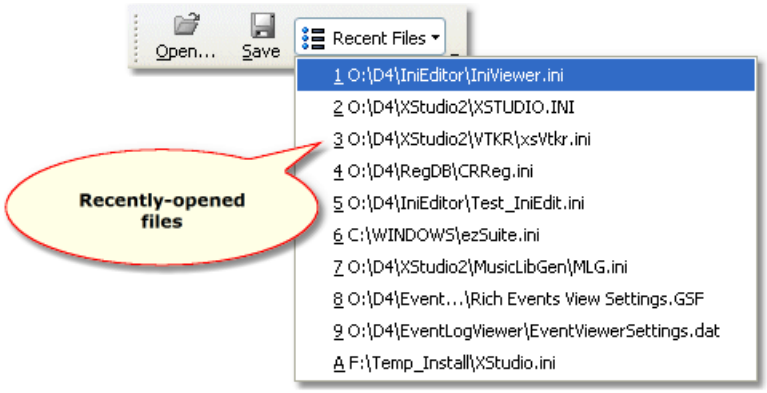

Recent FIles Menu

As a default, only files with an extension of ".ini" are displayed in the file open dialog. However, you can choose to display all files by changing the dialog's file type filter.

dcsTools Ini Editor can be used only with ini-style files - that is, files that contain section headings in the format **[SectionName]** and key/value pairs in the format **KeyName=Value**. While you may be able to open files of other types, they should not be edited or saved as results are at best unpredictable.

3.2 Searching for Data

When an ini file is open in dcsTools Ini Editor, you can search for text to locate a specific item. Menu items for searching are located under the main menu item **Edit**. You can also use functions keys to search ([**F11**]) and repeat your last search ([**F12**]).

All searches are partial match searches, meaning that if you enter "***file***" as the search criteria, items like "***File***Version" and "My***file***" will be found. All searches are case-insensitive.

When a new search is started, dcsTools Ini Editor starts with the first displayed item, regardless of how it is sorted. The section is examined first, then all parameters for that section are searched, followed by the next section, its parameters and so on.

When matching text is found, the matching row is highlighted and focused. If the row is not visible, it is brought into view.

When a search is repeated, dcsTools Ini Editor starts from the last matching position in the display and looks for the next match. If no matches are found, you are prompted to that effect.

When you change the sort order of any of the data columns, the search parameters are reset to start from the beginning of the displayed data. An advisory message is placed on the status bar.

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3.3 Editing Values

When editing an ini file with dcsTools Ini Editor, it's important to note that when the file is opened, it is kept entirely in system memory and all changes are made to the in-memory copy of the file. Changes are only permanent when you explicitly save the edited file. This provides some flexibility in the sense that changes are only saved when you decide the changed information is OK.

To edit any value, either a section name or key/value item, select the item to be edited and press the [**F2**] key or [**Double-Click**] on the item.

If you have the data navigator displayed (checked), you can use the toolbar buttons to begin editing, add or delete items. See the topic on Using Data Navigators for more information.

As changes are made, the application status bar is updated to reflect the count of changes made. The status LED is **red** when changes have been made, as a quick indicator the file has been edited.

Deleting Items

To delete a section or value, select the row to be deleted and press the [**Del**] key. You will be prompted to confirm the deletion. After confirming the deletion, the change counter and LED on the status bar are updated.

If you delete a ***section***, all parameters (key/value pairs) associated with that section are also deleted. There is no undo for this operation, other than reloading the file without saving it.

Adding Items

To add a section or key, select the location where you want to add the item and press the [**Ins**] key. Enter the information as needed. When you move off the newly-inserted row, the changes are posted to the in-memory copy of the ini file and the status bar is updated accordingly.

To cancel an insert, touch the [**Esc**] key or use the data navigator [**Cancel Edit**] button.

Placing Comments in an INI File

While less common today, INI files may have comments embedded in them. Comments are essentially user notes that may describe the purpose of a particular key or section - or may

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represent what amounts to disabling a key (making it invisible to the application using the INI file).

By convention, comments in an INI file being with a semicolon (;). The characters "**REM**" are also used on occasion. These comment prefixes are used to prevent the user from manually editing an INI file and inadvertently creating a key/value pair that is recognized by the application that uses the file.

You can insert or edit comments with some limitations and side effects. See the section on Known Issues & Limitations for information on where to place comments.

3.4 Saving Files

When edits are complete, save the INI file using the main menu item **File | Save** or use the toolbar [**Save**] button. The file is saved and the status bar LED and change count are updated appropriately.

You can save a file to another name and/or location by using the main menu item **File | Save As..** option. In this case, the original file is left intact and the edited file is saved under a new name and location of your choosing. This is useful for making backup copies of preferences files.

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Reference

Part IV

This section contains more detailed background information on a number of key subjects that will help you to gain a better understanding of how dcsTools Ini Editor works.

Studying these sections is not absolutely essential but it will make it much easier for you to use dcsTools Ini Editor more efficiently and effectively.

4.1 Command-Line Switches

dcsTools Ini Editor provides command-line switches to add functionality for users. This section documents available switches and their usage. Switches can be entered in any order and are not case-sensitive. To add a command-line switch, modify the dcsTools Ini Editor shortcut or open a command window (DOS prompt) and enter the application name (IniViewer.exe) followed by a space. Add the switch (as documented below), separating each switch with a space.

Available Command-Line Switches

Switch	Usage
/F	Used to specify a file to be opened when dcsTools Ini Editor is launched. This switch is also used when associating a file type with dcsTools Ini Editor so the file can be opened within the operating system's file view.

You must have a space between the end of the executable (program) name and the first command-line switch. When entering a file name that contains spaces, the file name must be wrapped in quotes, for example:

/F"C:\Program Files\ My Program\My IniFile.ini"

4.2 Ini File Structure Information

For those who might be unfamiliar with the INI file origins and structure, this sections covers some basics of what INI files are and how they are constructed.

Note: Portions from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

Definition

An initialization file, or INI file, is a configuration file that contains configuration data for Microsoft Windows based applications.

Starting with Windows 95, the INI file format was superseded but not entirely replaced by a registry database in Microsoft operating systems. Recently, XML became a popular choice for

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encoding configuration, as well as other kinds of data for many applications, but INI format is still in widespread use.

Although made popular by Windows, INI files can be used on any system thanks to its flexibility. It allows a program to store configuration data, which can then be easily parsed and changed.

File Format

A typical INI file might look like this:

```
[Section1]
; some comment on section1
var1=abc
var2=451
[Section2]
; another comment
var1=123
var2=dfg
```

Format

The elements of the INI file format:

- **Sections**: Section declarations start with '**[**' and end with '**]**' as in [Section1] and [Section2] above.
- **Parameters**: The "var1 = abc" above is an example of a parameter. Parameters are made up of a **key** ('var1'), equals sign ('**=**'), and a **value** ('abc'). For this reason, they are also known as key/value pairs or simply items.
- **Comments**: All the lines starting with a semicolon ('**;**') are assumed to be comments, and are ignored. For additional information on comments and how dcsTools Ini Editor handles them, see the topic on Known Issues & Limitations.

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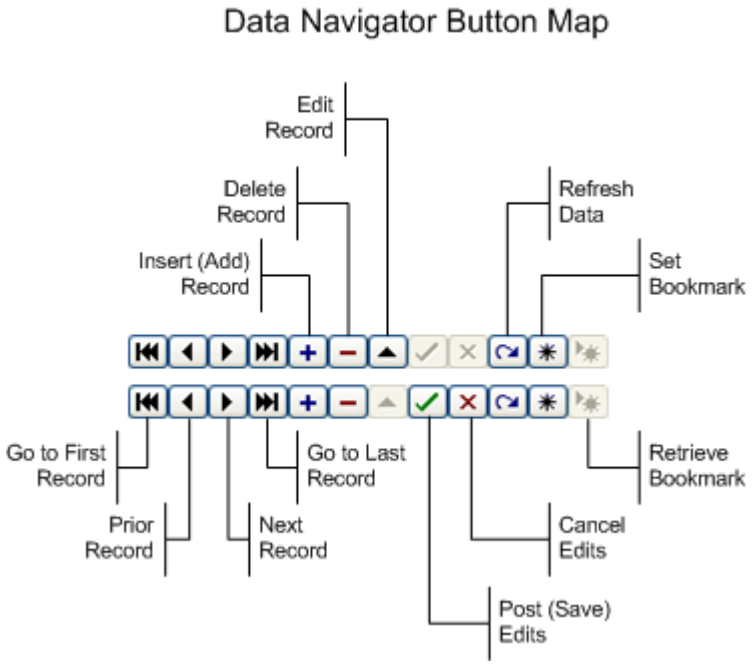
4.3 Using Data Navigators

dcsTools Ini Editor optionally makes use of so-called "data navigators". Essentially, a data navigator is an organized set of buttons that provides an easy-to-use interface for navigating around in displayed data. In addition to navigation, navigators include buttons to add (insert), edit, & delete items.

Two example navigators are shown here – there are two because the "state" (availability) of buttons will vary depending on the current task. For instance, if you are at the beginning of a file, the navigator buttons for moving backwards through the file are disabled – at least, until you move away from the beginning of the file.



Depending the area of dcsTools Ini Editor you're working in, some of the navigator buttons depicted are not visible – because the functionality they provide is not allowed.

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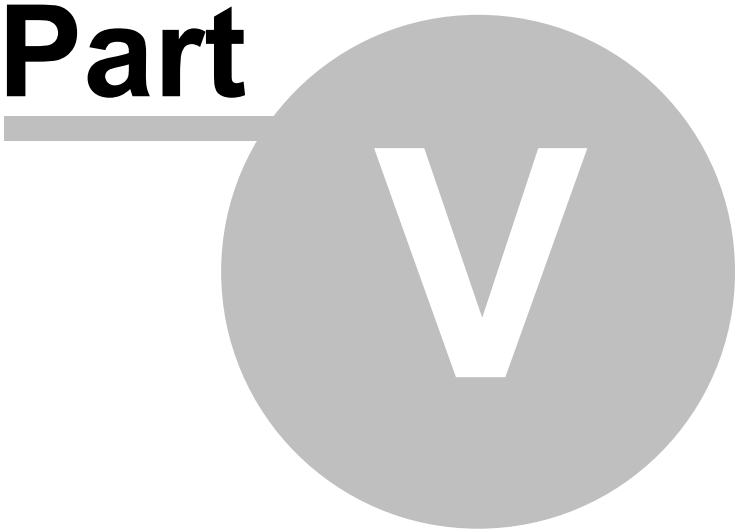
Known Issues and Limitations



This section documents any known issues or limitations of dcsTools Ini Editor. dcsTools Ini Editor has been designed to be as trouble-free as possible and has been thoroughly tested. However, not every usage scenario can be anticipated. This section is intended as a starting point diagnosing and solving problems, but should not be viewed as an all-encompassing source of problem resolution.

If the difficulty you're experiencing is not covered here, contact the dealer who provided you with dcsTools Ini Editor first. Alternatively, you can contact dcsTools.com - see the topic on technical support.

Application Bugs or Errors

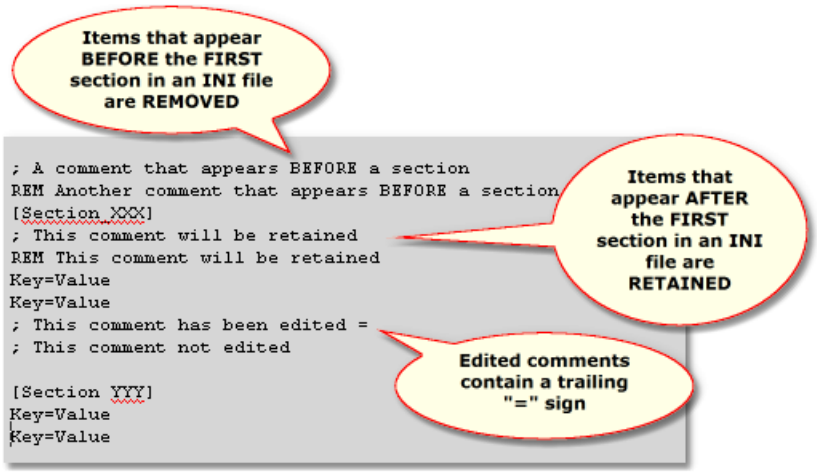
Bugs and errors generally fall into one of two categories - a bug, which is the application not doing something as you might have predicted it would, or; an error, which is the failure of the application to run or perform a specific task altogether.

If you find a bug, report it. Every effort is made to ensure dcsTools Ini Editor performs as expected, but there may be circumstances that were not predicted in the development of the software. See the section on Technical Support for information on reporting a bug.

If you encounter an error, you will get an error message indicating a severe failure and dcsTools Ini Editor may terminate. Provisions are made to "catch" such errors and log the error information to a file in the dcsTools Ini Editor application directory. Depending on the host operating system, the file name is **IniViewer.elf** or **IniViewer.el**. Again, report any application errors you encounter. You may be asked to send the appropriate log file for analysis.

5.1 INI File Comments

By design, dcsTools Ini Editor will strip out some comments that may have been placed in an INI file that is being edited. Comments, if visible ***and edited***, will also be affected. The example shown documents these limitations.



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If you wish to document manual changes made to an ini file, you may wish to consider creating a new unique section (i.e. [MyNotes]) and placing notes in this section as key/value pairs representing a note title and the note text itself. In this way, the notes will be organized together and are not likely to be removed by any application.

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Contacting dcsTools.com

If you need to contact dcsTools.com, you can do so using one of the following methods. We are here to help, so do not hesitate to communicate with us when needed.

Mailing Address

C-R Media
8494 Saratoga Lane
Eden Prairie, MN 55347
USA

Telephone Information

Sales and Technical Support can be reached from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, U.S Central Time

Voice: 952-949-9450

FAX: 952-949-9448

Email Information

To contact us via email, use our on-line contact form. If you wish to use a standard email client, send correspondence to: rich@c-rmedia.com.

Technical Support

To contact technical support for our products, use the telephone numbers or email information provided above. You can also send an on-line product-specific email.

Web Site

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Revision History

Part VII

This topic contains historical information on changes, enhancements and corrections to dcsTools Ini Editor by version number and date. For the most recent changes and enhancements, see the What's New topic.

Version 1.7.0.60 - 01/27/2016

1. **Enhancement**. dcsTools Ini Editor has been updated to support Windows 10.

Version 1.6.0.55 - 04/04/2014

1. **Enhancement**. dcsTools Ini Editor now detects Windows 8.1 and Windows Server 2012R2 operating systems and adjusts its display accordingly.

Version 1.5.0.50 - 06/26/2013

2. **Enhancement**. dcsTools Ini Editor now detects Windows 8 and Windows Server 2012 operating systems and adjusts its display accordingly.
3. **Fix**. Very occasionally, when dcsTools Ini Editor was creating a temporary file to store information for display, the temporary file was not correctly created and the information would not be displayed. The problem has been corrected.

Version 1.4.0.40 - 08/14/2012

1. **Change**. Data sorting is now case-insensitive for a more intuitive order of items when sorted.
2. **Change**. The **Display Style** toolbar item "**XP**" has been changed to "**Native**" to reflect newer operating systems that support this appearance type.
3. **Fix**. On certain operating systems with multiple monitors, the dialog that appears when opening or saving a file is placed on the wrong monitor. This problem has been corrected.

Version 1.3.0.25 - 05/19/2011

1. **Enhancement**. Search functionality has been added. Menu items and shortcut keys are available for finding text and repeating the search.
2. **Enhancement**. Parameters (item/value pairs) can now be sorted independently in each section. Sorting can be cleared for an individual section or all sections at once.

Version 1.2.1.20 - 05/07/2010

1. **Enhancement**. Application icons for dcsTools Ini Editor have been updated.
2. **Enhancement**. dcsTools Ini Editor now includes a custom icon used in displaying associated files in Windows Explorer when ini files are registered during installation.

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Version 1.2.0.15 - 04/29/2010

1. **Enhancement**. dcsTools Ini Editor is now aware of multiple monitor host systems and properly saves and restores its position on the correct monitor.
2. **Enhancement**. dcsTools Ini Editor now reports the host operating system in more detail and has been updated to reflect the release of Windows 7.
3. **Enhancement**. dcsTools Ini Editor can now be associated with ini files, enabling the opening of a file from Windows file explorer. See the topic on Command-Line Switches for additional information.
4. **Enhancement**. When an item is too long to fit within the display, the text is now displayed as a hint when the mouse is positioned over the item.
5. **Enhancement**. XStudio hot button files (*.btn) can now be filtered in the Open File dialog.
6. **Change**. When tool bars are docked on the left or right sides of the main dialog, the button captions are no longer rotated.
7. **Change**. If a recently-used file is selected from the drop-down list and no longer exists, you are prompted to optionally remove the entry.

Version 1.1.1.11 - 10/15/2007

1. **Change**. Toolbar settings are now stored in a separate file instead of the dcsTools Ini Editor preferences file for ease in maintenance.
2. **Enhancement**. The display of data navigators can now be toggled from the main menu, using the menu item **View | Data Navigator**.
3. **Enhancement**. Most INI file comments are now retained after editing. See the topic on Known Issues & Limitations for more details.

Version 1.1.0.10 - 07/21/2007

1. **Enhancement**. Changes have been made to make editing more intuitive, including adding the ability to display custom data navigators on-demand. Use the pop-up menu to show or hide the data navigators.

Version 1.0.0.6 - 09/22/2006

1. Initial public release of dcsTools Ini Editor.

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