Participant Guide

Plain Text Live Script File Format

Thank you for participating in a beta test for live scripts as plain text (.M) files in MATLAB. Please follow the instructions below to conduct the beta.

*Plain text live scripts: These are live scripts with .M file extension. They can contain MATLAB code, rich text, embedded outputs, controls, and tasks.*

**Instructions**

**Background:**

* The goal of this study is to get usage feedback on Plain Text Live Script File Format
* We hope that you can use the software during your day-to-day work and capture your thoughts, feedback, comments, and bugs that you might encounter while working with this functionality.
* We want usability feedback about this file format when used with Source Control Workflows.

**Getting Started:**

* Ensure that you have ***MATLAB R2024a Pre-release or later*** installed on your computer. You can download and install it from here: <https://www.mathworks.com/downloads/>
  + *Note: For this step you might need to login using your MathWorks account.*
* You are required to enable to The ***New MATLAB Desktop*** experience for this feature to work. You can enable the New Desktop experience by following the instructions here: Use this link to download and install the New Desktop for MATLAB Beta Add-on: <https://www.mathworks.com/matlabcentral/fileexchange/119593-new-desktop-for-matlab-beta>
  + *Note: For this step you might need to login using your MathWorks account.*
* To ***enable the beta*** software, download the p-coded file from the following location and run it in MATLAB.
  + <https://www.mathworks.com/downloads/csd/BETA/LiveScripts/enablePlainTextLiveScripts.p>
* To ***disable the beta*** software, download the p-coded file from the following location and run it in MATLAB.
  + <https://www.mathworks.com/downloads/csd/BETA/LiveScripts/disablePlainTextLiveScripts.p>

**Usage instructions:**

* Please try to work on your own files with this software for a significant number (6 to 8 hrs) of hours over the course of 2 to 4 weeks.
  + We want to hear from you about your usage experience of this file format in Source Control workflows.
* Type in your thoughts/feedback with us in the table below.
* If you face any technical difficulties while accessing the prototype, please reach out to Rohan Amarapurkar ([ramarapu@mathworks.com](mailto:ramarapu@mathworks.com)) or Michael Abboud ([mabboud@mathworks.com](mailto:mabboud@mathworks.com)).

**Known limitations of the software**

1. The help or doc functions may display unexpected content for live functions saved using the plain text file format.
2. When comparing two live scripts or functions saved using the plain text file format, the Comparison Tool compares the files as plain text files instead of live scripts on functions.
3. Some document functionality may be unavailable for live scripts and functions saved using the plain text format.

**Tasks**

* Use the following table as a guide/prompt for your day-to-day work the software.
* Each time you work on any of the tasks mentioned below, please note your experience in the feedback column in the table below.
* *We acknowledge that you might not perform all these tasks every day but hope that you share your feedback/thoughts about these workflows whenever possible over the course of next 2 to 4 weeks.*
* To learn more about Live Scripts as Plain Text (.m) files please refer to the documentation (look for email attachment) PDF that was sent to you.
* ***Please make sure to download the p-coded file from the following location and run it in MATLAB before you try the following tasks.*** 
  + [***https://www.mathworks.com/downloads/csd/BETA/LiveScripts/enablePlainTextLiveScripts.p***](https://www.mathworks.com/downloads/csd/BETA/LiveScripts/enablePlainTextLiveScripts.p)

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| **Task** | **Feedback** |
| Task 1: **Getting familiar with the file format**   1. Open an MLX file you are currently working on in MATLAB. 2. Save the MLX file as a “.M” file. 3. Hint: Use the Save As button in the toolstrip to save MLX as M file. 4. Familiarize yourself with the new file format. Make code changes, run the file, add rich text, live tasks and/or live controls, set break points, debug any issues with the file etc. 5. Save and re-open the file. 6. Commit/Submit the file to a Source Control software of your choice. |  |
| **Task 2: Source Control Workflows**   1. If possible, pair up with a collaborator and make changes to file at the same time. 2. Push the changes to your repository. 3. View the changes as diffs in the Source Control Software. 4. Merge the changes by resolving the merge conflict. Try resolving the merge conflict both manually and automatically. 5. Try this with several files.   *Some prompts/sample questions for you to start typing in your feedback:*   1. *Briefly describe the task you were performing also include how long you performed the task for.* 2. *What did you think of the workflow?* 3. *Briefly describe the pains that you faced while working on this task?* 4. *Were you able to perform your workflow despite the pain?* 5. *How can we improve this workflow in the future?* |  |
| **Task 3: Other things to try**   1. Open the .M live script files in notepad++, VS Code any text editor of your choice. 2. Make changes to the file in another Editor. 3. Create new Live Scripts in MATLAB and add code, rich text, live tasks, live controls, images etc. to the file. 4. Run the file. 5. Try opening this file in an older version of MATLAB   *Some prompts/sample questions for you to start typing in your feedback:*   1. *Briefly describe the task you were performing also include how long you performed the task for.* 2. *What did you think of the workflow?* 3. *Briefly describe the pains that you faced while working on this task?* 4. *Were you able to perform your workflow despite the pain?* 5. *How can we improve this workflow in the future?* |  |
| Any additional feedback for us? |  |