**What purpose does it server now and is it possible to create or modify - shell32.dll?**

Having looked through the Microsoft documentation on Windows Shell (“Windows Shell”, 2018 plus down-path documentation), I learned that Shell32.dll is one of 2 major dynamic link libraries in the Windows Shell. The Windows Shell provides the user with the Windows OS “experience”, such as window frames, drop down menus, taskbar, file icons, and a cute little trash can. Without the Windows Shell, of which Shell32.dll makes up a large part, Windows OS would essentially have a command line interface. And so Shell32.dll makes the GUI magic happen.

According to ProcessLibrary.com (“Shell32.dll”, n.d.), Shell32.dll is a memory hog; and, although it is possible to get errors due to Shell32.dll (for instance, when applications conflict with it), you should NOT uninstall Shell32.dll if you want Windows OS to work properly.

The above said, there are those who will be tempted to modify/customize Shell32.dll, like (InfantPro‘Aravind’, 2010; Winempyrean ,2013), but this is NOT recommended. Nevertheless, this link provides a video showing a simple customization of the OS:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a7yEAK2Ow3Q>

However, my understanding of the Windows OS documentation is that Windows OS is extensible without resorting to modifying pre-installed OS files; instead, one could do things like “Creating Shell Data Source Objects and Extending the Shell Namespace”, “Extending Windows Explorer” and “Extending the Desktop” (“Shell Extensibility”, 2018 and down-path documentation).

Anyway, if you must have the Punisher logo on your desktop to intimidate your children, you can always just change it in the Desktop Icon Settings. :P

References

InfantPro‘Aravind’ (2010). How to edit Shell32.dll? How to add custom pictures/icons into shell32.dll? SuperUser. Retrieved from <https://superuser.com/questions/152816/how-to-edit-shell32-dll-how-to-add-custom-pictures-icons-into-shell32-dll>

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