

Crastinate-pro

Fri 1 Jan 5:30

So talking to my newpew Matt Kinsman last night about this gave me a whole new perspective on Crastinate, and actually brought the two types of documents together. And the really cool thing is, Matt owns a pre, and loves the concept. So he might be a great beta tester.

Here it is. Plans are actually just big complicated reminders. What he said was, college students would love this, because for them, each morning is different, depending on what they have going on, and when they have to be at class. He said something like, "I can't just set my alarm for the same time every morning." So a college student may have one kind of morning every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and a different kind on Tuesday and Thursday.

So that's where the light bulb went on for me. Plans themselves need to have recurrence and location-dependence just like reminders. So a plan is just a big reminder. So someone with a life like Matt could set up his Mon-Wed-Fri plan and have it recur on those days, and his Tue-Thu plan recur on those days, but make them both location-specific. So when he's away on Spring Break, they automatically become inactive.

Fri 1 Jan 5:24

First, a note about this document. Starting at this point, instead of trying to maintain this whold thing as a document, I'm going to just make it more like a log, with new ideas on top, which may revise earlier ideas. Neverthe less, I may still go back and revise previous text.

Wed 30 Dec 8:44

...will eventually combine two or three of my favorite ways I used my Treo and, of course, add all of the adaptations that I wished they had.

- 1) Morning Plan
- 2) Clock+ Alarms
- 3) Brainforest outliner

I'm planning to tackle the first function, "Morning Plan," in the first release. This was never a single application, but a function that I had cobbled together using three applications -- sheet to go, memos and brainforest.

The first one, Clock+ Alarms, I was not able to carry forward to the Pre, and I really miss it. So much that I keep my Treo around just for that, although I use it primarily in the office. Clock+ alarms worked pretty well for me, but I always wished for some improvements. I don't think I use them as intended by the developer.

It may also replace Brainforest, as well. Both the morning plan and reminder function will be structured in kind of an outline form with, so brainforest may simply flow out of it. For example, in Clock+ I have a reminder to make a phone call. It's a daily reminder, 'cause I almost always have someone I need to call. Well, really, it amounts to a reminder to look at a Brainforest checklist, where I keep a list of people I need to call. With Crastinate, the reminder to make a phone call would be linked to the contact. Whoa -- big brain storm here.

One note I want to put in my user doc is to invite the user to send me descriptions of how they use my app. A lot of times people take apps and do stuff with them that the developer never intended or even imagined. And maybe it works perfectly, or maybe it is combined with other apps to make something new, like I do with the combination of FileZ and Clock+, or Sheet-to-go plus memos plus Brainforest to make morning plans.

The "Morning plan" function is easier to describe, although to make one I use more applications to do than Clock+. It does two things: 1) It tells you when to get up in the morning and 2) It helps you stay on track so you're on time. It can be used to plan a meeting, or accomplish some kind of multi-step task by a certain time, or to estimate when you will be done with something, like a meeting.

Clock+ alarms has a set of alarms that sound at different times of the day. I combined it with

FileZ to create different sets of alarms for different types of days.

Morning plan. You specify the ending time of the plan, for example, what time you had to be at work, or what time you want to leave the house. Because it's a linked plan, you specify the duration of each step. Crastinate calculates the time each step should be done all the way back to the first step, which would be to wake up. Since one of the properties of a step is an alarm, you could specify an alarm on the wakeup step. This essentially allows you to use Crastinate-Pro as your alarm clock. But instead of setting your alarm for the time you want to get up, you set your morning plan for what time you need to leave the house, or be at the client site, or the doctor's office. Every time you use your morning plan, you make adjustments in the steps and durations. Maybe you require more time in the shower than you estimated the first time. Once you have honed and crafted your morning plan to perfection, it will get you up in time to be ready, and keep you on track all morning. Then you can create different types of morning plans for different situations. Maybe you do things different when you have to pack for a trip. Maybe you will want to have a "hurry-up" morning plan where you do just the essential things.

A plan is made up of steps. But steps can have sub-steps. So a given step can be comprised of a number of steps. For example, say you have a step which is a reminder to make phone calls. Within that step you could list the phone calls that you need to make.

So the properties of a plan would be (default values in CAPS)

- Plan name (no default, must be specified in order to save)
- Linked steps (yes or NO)
- Autoactivate (yes or NO)
- Active (YES or no)

If Autoactivate is yes, then the active property is disabled, and the location field is enabled. The active field then is automatically set based on the location.

- Location - any (default), one or a list. If the location is something besides "any" then the steps in the plan are only active if the device meets the location specification. So, you could have a plan that only becomes active if you're in the office or at home. Or you could have another plan that becomes active whenever you're not in a location or list of locations.

Each step has several properties. Some of the properties are different in a linked plan.

Every reminder has the following properties (default values in CAPS). Several of the properties will not have default values, but will be carried from the previously defined step.

- Step name (no default, must be specified in order to save)
- Notes (NONE)
- Date (TODAY, tomorrow, choose date)
- Start Time. No default. In linked plans, it is calculated. Otherwise, it is required.
- Alarm properties, consisting of...
- Sound. It will be selectable from a list of sounds available on the device. Hopefully, when Crastinate-Pro is installed, it can include a set of sounds.
- Volume (off, low, medium, high, ascending)
- Vibrate (yes or no)
- Remind x times
- At x minute intervals
- Snooze x minutes. Note, this is the initial snooze interval for this step, it can be accepted or changed when the alarm goes

The following are properties of steps only in linked plans:

- Duration (specified)
- End Time (calculated)

The following are properties of steps only in unlinked plans:

- Recurrence pattern, which has its own set of properties:
- Daily, weekly (on day), monthly, until date

Ideas for future versions.

I won't be able to get everything in version 1, even the ideas I have already described. At some point, I need to organize my ideas into some kind of release definition.

1) Share plans between devices.

Let's say you need to get the family out the door for a trip, and you would like to leave by 6. You have several tasks to do. There are two of you working together to get ready. If you could share the task list, when one of you marks a task as done, the other can see it.

You could also use it to share reminders. Let's say your wife orders a prescription and wants you to stop at the pharmacy and pick it up on the way home. After checking with you to see if you can do that for you (or not checking with you), she can then put a reminder on your device.

It could also be used to schedule SMS messages.

And the messages could be location-specific. When Roland shows up at this location (optionally at or after a specific time), make this message pop up on his device (or send this text message to his device).

2) Export

Another feature for a future release would be to have the ability to export your data so you can use it on another platform.