A sample of desktop icon text effects

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It seems everybody and his brother has an obvious solution to the desktop background problem. Of course, none of these people actually **tested** their solution to see if it actually was usable. Because geniuses don't need to test their grand pronouncements. That's why they're called geniuses.

Let's see how well these geniuses fared. I sat down and implemented their brilliant suggestions since I am myself not a genius.

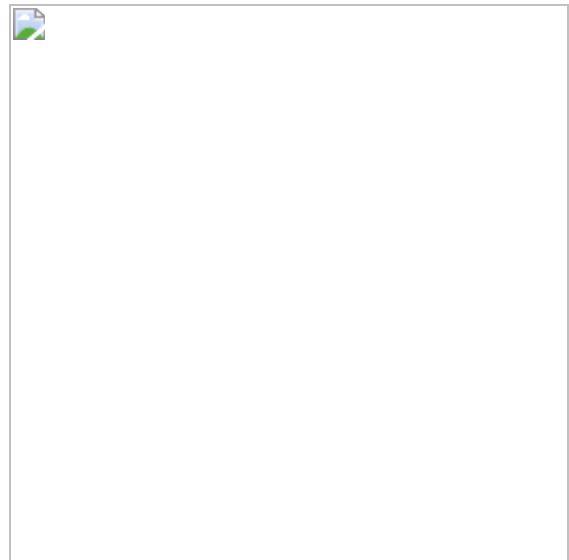From left to right, the effects are as follows:

- Solid background + text. (This is what Windows uses.)
- Black text, no effects. (As a baseline.)
- Xor.
- Simple drop shadow, drawing black at (+1,+1), black at (0,0) then white at (0,0).
- One-pixel wide outline.
- Two-pixel wide outline.
- 50% alpha.

To my untrained eye, the only readable ones are the first one and the "two-pixel wide outline" (which nobody suggested but which I just made up). The enormously popular Xor is completely useless.

Of course, all but the first three are expensive operations, requiring multiple drawing passes, so they are unsuitable for the "high performance" drawing scenario that I described in the original article.

Therefore, the only drawing method that looks good and is also fast is the first one. And it so happens that's what Windows uses when it needs to be fast.

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