

Laptop dual-display feature

Disclosed is a method for making more intelligent use of the fact that Laptops have two displays.

Laptops typically have an internal display screen and an additional connector for an external screen. The current state of the art is to configure these is so that the same content appears on both. This is normally what is desired, but sometimes it might be advantageous to have the ability to display different application windows on each of these (e.g during a presentation you might want to display slides only on the external screen, but have additional speaker notes appear on the laptop display for the benefit of the presenter).

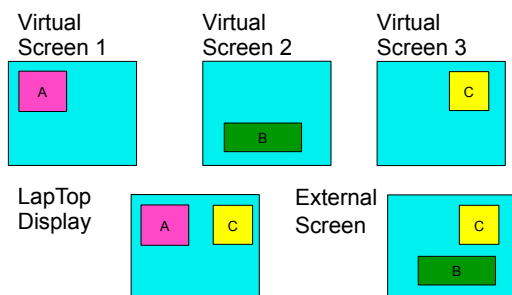
At the moment many laptops ship with two video adaptors to facilitate displaying different applications on an external screen. However, when using this feature you cannot have applications appearing on both screens.

This technique describes a way to easily display application output on:

- the internal display panel
- the external screen
- both of the above

Many graphical operating systems (including Windows*) are based upon the idea of having virtual windows associated with applications and then displaying those windows on one or more physical screens. What this technique would do would be to represent the internal laptop display and the externally connected screen as separate screens with an additional "virtual device" established which could be used by applications which wanted to display the same content on both devices.

The following illustration shows how it would work with three applications A, B and C whose output is directed to virtual screen 1, 2 and 3 respectively. As you can see A&C can be seen on the Laptop display, but B&C can be seen on the externally connected screen.



* Windows is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation in the United States, other countries, or both.