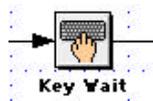


Topic

The Automator is a Multithreaded program that allows the parallel execution of tasks. This means that the Automator can perform two tasks at the same time. By using the “Key wait” task in the same automation, the user can choose when to run each path using one key press.

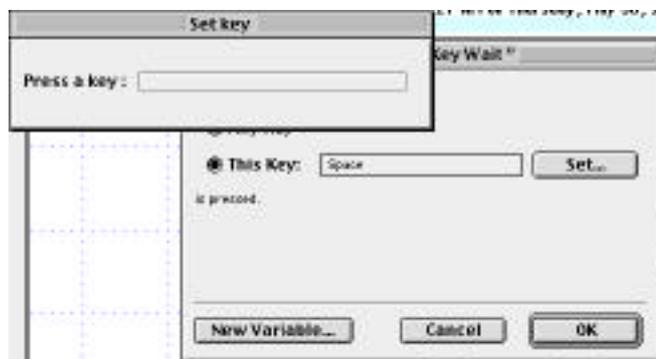
Discussion

The “Key wait” task can be found in the Extras menu of the Automator.



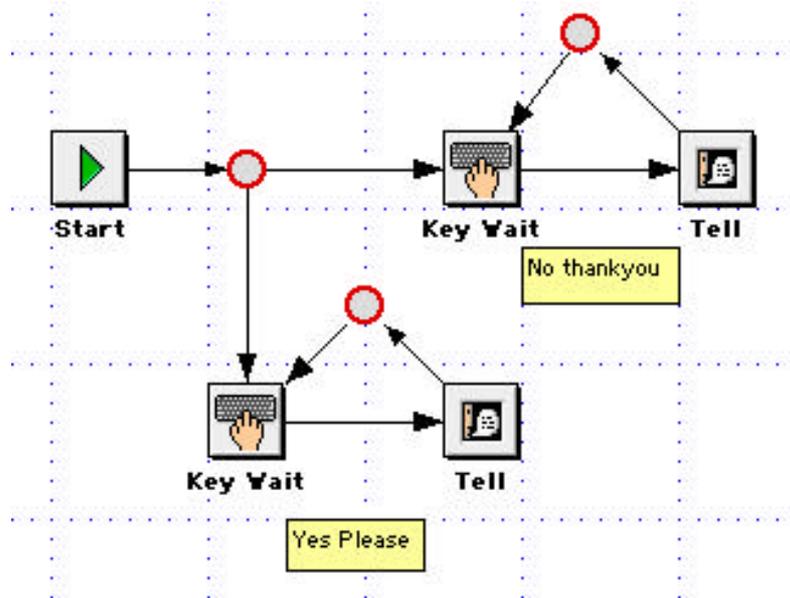
To set which key to use in the “Key wait” task, double click on the task to open the set-up dialog.

Select “This key” then press the set button.
Now press the key that you want to use to activate the task.



Now when the automation reaches the “Key wait” task, the protocol will pause until you hit the selected key.

The task can be very useful when used in combination with parallel processing. Below is a simple automation illustrating the use of the two functions:



In this example verbal Tell tasks have been used to illustrate the presence of separate pathways, but you can make them as complicated or as simple as you like. (Null tasks have been used to tidy the automation so that you can see what is going on.)

In the example shown above, the “Key wait” tasks have been set up using different keys to activate each command. Hitting the “Y” key will activate the Tell task to say “Yes please” and hitting the “N” key will activate the Tell task to say “No thank you”.

As the automation splits into two branches, both pathways pause because of the presence of the “Key wait” task.

By hitting either “Y” or “N” on the keyboard the user can decide on which pathway to use.

The “Key wait” task can be used in many ways. Some examples are:

1. To make choices about which fluorophore to capture instead of asking questions using "Input" tasks.
2. To choose whether to delete a layer from the Image Document.
3. To view or select different layers within an automation.