

Webcam Motion Detection using Growl for Windows

This guide is intended to show you a way using “Free” software to receive Growl Notifications when motion is detected on your webcam. In addition, the software used also offers some cool tools for viewing your webcam remotely from a browser.

Whilst the software is free, I would urge people to donate to the two individuals who made this possible with their unique software

GrowlforWindows - <http://growl.info/donate.php>

Yawcam – Make a Donation link on <http://www.yawcam.com>

Also, using your v3.0 iPhone (tested on a 3G, but should work on other models – including Touch) and a low cost application you can receive Push Notifications on your iPhone when motion is detected and then you can view a live stream of video from the camera,

Do you want to know how ? Then read on ...

The first part of the Guide will cover the PC and then for the iPhone users, I will explain how to get notifications on your iPhone

Part 1 – Setting up your Windows PC (tested on XP Home SP3, but should work on other)

What you need

To make this work, we need 3 pieces of Software

1. GrowlforWindows. This is available from www.growlforwindows.com. Installation is easy and there is a wealth of information on the website and always a friendly person on the Google Group that will help you get the best out of this software. The place to start is <http://www.growlforwindows.com/gfw/about.aspx> - here you will find detailed information on what GrowlforWindows is and an helpful guide and online help to get the software setup.

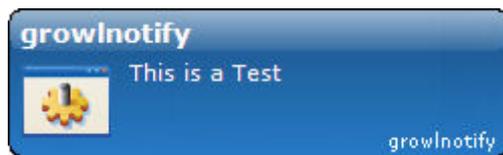


2. GrowlNotify.

This is available at <http://www.growlforwindows.com/gfw/help/growlnotify.aspx>. The software is developed by the same developer at GrowlforWindows and is included in some of the later Beta releases. For the purpose of this guide, I am assuming that you either download the files from the link above OR you find them in your program files directory and copy them to a directory called Growl on your C Drive making the path c:\Growl

At this point it is probably a good time to make sure this is working . If you open a command prompt and type c:\Growl\growlnotify.exe "This is a test"

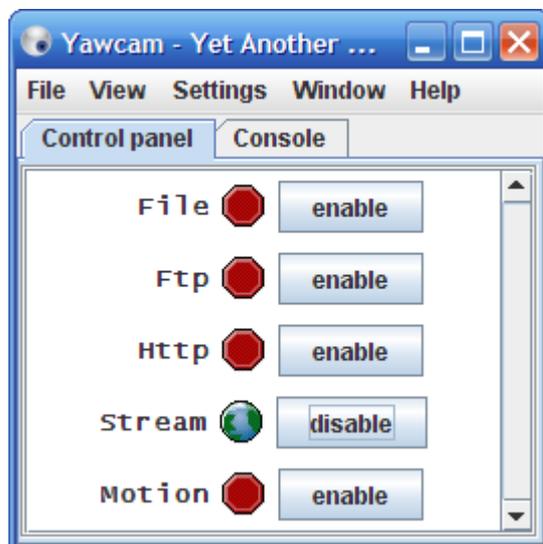
This should give you a pop up in the bottom right corner of your screen like this.



There are lots of configurable options you can do with GrowlNotify and these are document at the link above.

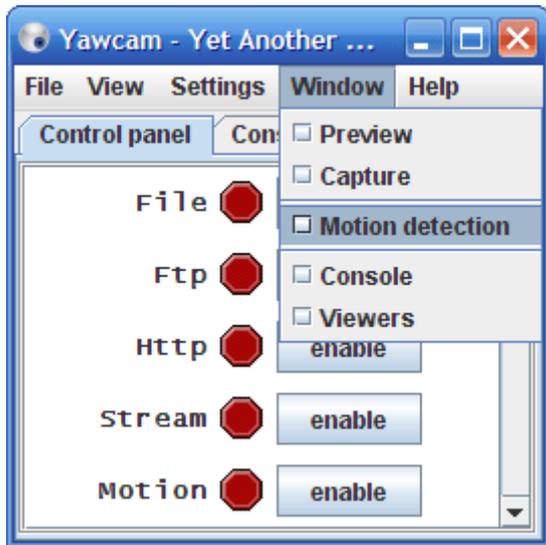
3. Yawcam.

This is available from www.yawcam.com. The development of this software appears to have stopped and the application hasn't been updated for a while, however I must say during testing it seems very reliable. The control panel is detailed below.

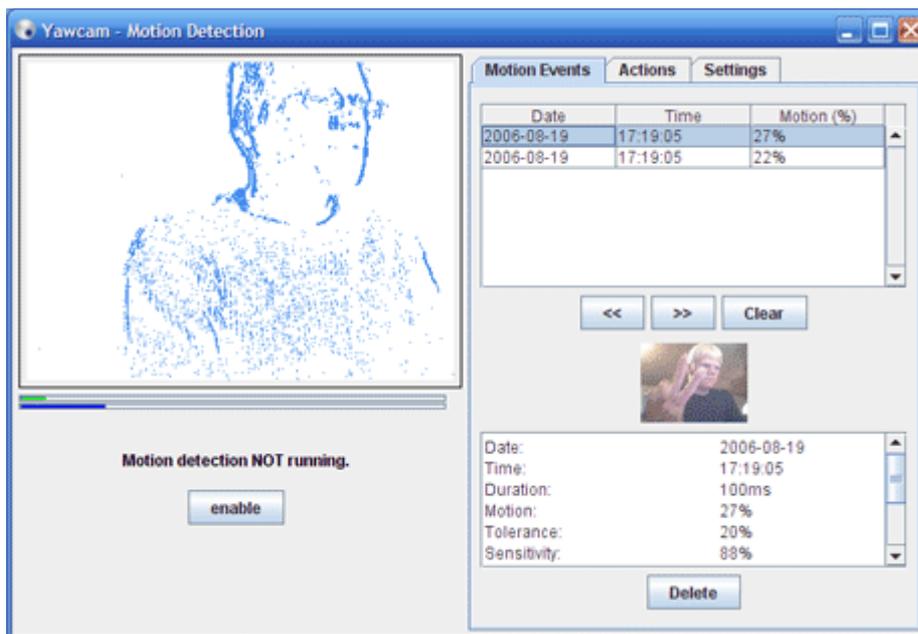


There are a lot of user configurable settings within the application, so I don't want to get into describing each of these as the software is fairly intuitive to use. There is also comprehensive help available online at http://www.yawcam.com/help/help_main.php which explains all the options. Once you have your webcam configured, the important thing here is to tell yawcam to call growlnotify when it detects movement.

The Motion detection window can be accessed by clicking "**Window -> Motion detection**" in the text menu:



When you open the motion detection window it looks like this:



The left side of the window consists of an area where you can preview the motion. It also holds a control button to enable and disable the actions when motion occurs. This button has the same function as the enable/disable button for Motion in the main window

The right side of the window holds three tabs:

Motion Events - Lists information about motion events detected by Yawcam and what actions that were taken.

Actions - Let you enable what actions Yawcam shall take when a motion occurs

Settings - Let you specify how Yawcam shall detect the motion. E.g. sensitivity, tolerance and preview appearance.

On the Actions Setting, you need to need to select run exe and then type the following

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c:\Growl\growlnotify.exe "Motion Detected"
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Note the option for Flood control, I set mine to 15 seconds for testing so you don't flood yourself with notifications during testing.

Once you have done this, follow the instructions on the Yawcam help to fine tune your settings for motion detection and you are ready to go.

For advanced features, I urge you to check out the other options for File, FTP, Http and Stream. These are extremely useful option used in conjunction with the notification.

Part 2 – Setting up your iPhone to receive notifications.

What you need

1. iPhone

If you have an iPhone, you probably know that it supports Push Notifications and you may have even used them with some of the Apps that support Push (IM+, Beejive, etc). We use a separate piece of software that interfaces with the Apple push mechanism to receive Push Notifications.

2. Prowl for the iPhone

This is a payable app which you can purchase from the Apple App Store. At the time of writing it is £1.79 in the App Store. You need to install the app and then follow the instructions for configuring the application which will involve you registering on the Prowl Website – <http://prowl.weks.net/>.

This is an approved app store app and I haven't had any problems with it and it has been loaded on my iPhone since it was released early July 2009.

The basic functionality of this is that when a Growl Notification is received on the PC (like we just did in Part 1), it is sent to the Prowl Application via Push Notification and displays on your iPhone.

Once you have the iPhone set up, then you need to make some small configuration changes on the GrowlforWindows to forward to your iPhone. The changes are documented at <http://blog.growlforwindows.com/2009/07/prowl-notifications-on-your-iphone.html>

These instructions are for Beta16 – we are on Beta 19 at the time of writing, but these instructions are still applicable.

Once you have configured this, then you should be all set to receive notifications of movement on your iPhone.

The next step is to view the video stream on your iPhone – If you have enabled Http and Stream within Yawcam then you should be able to view images on your iPhone by entering the corresponding URLs in your iPhone Browser. Look up Stream and Http in the Ywcam help for details on how to set this up. Goto Help > Whats my URL in the Yawcam Application to find the URLs.