

Step-by-Step Command

Command Example: Sales Tax

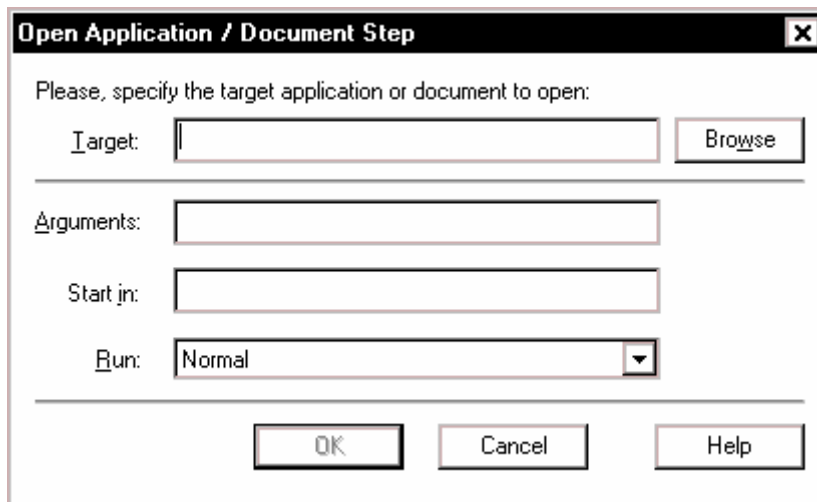
We start with a single Step-by-Step command. The task will be to help calculate sales tax (roughly equivalent to VAT taxes) quickly. Common in a sales tax calculation is opening Calculator, and then entering the sales tax rate and a multiplication operator. Then the amount of the purchase is needed. The amount of the purchase can vary so much we choose to stop the command at the point where the purchase amount is entered.

The steps needed are:

1. Open Calculator
2. Enter the Sales Tax rate
3. Enter the multiply operator
4. End – let the user enter the amount of purchase to complete the task.

Because we commonly use the “Open” as a key word for starting an application, we will call this command “*open sales tax.*” Start it by saying “*Add New Command,*” then filling in the command name “open sales tax” and the command description. With Step-by-Step commands, the command description is the only place available for command documentation. Enter “test” as the group name.

Select “Step-by-Step”. In the unlabeled drop-down menu that starts with “Keystroke”, select “Open (application)”. Then click “Insert”. That pops up a menu such as:



The screenshot shows a dialog box titled "Open Application / Document Step". The dialog contains the following elements:

- Text: "Please, specify the target application or document to open:"
- Field: "Target:" followed by an empty text box and a "Browse" button.
- Field: "Arguments:" followed by an empty text box.
- Field: "Start in:" followed by an empty text box.
- Field: "Run:" followed by a dropdown menu currently set to "Normal".
- Buttons: "OK", "Cancel", and "Help" at the bottom.

For Calculator, you can browse to the application – calc.exe in the Windows or WinNT directory. The other defaults are much the same as if you were establishing a shortcut on your Windows Desktop to open the application. Close the window.

Next, with many applications we would choose a Wait time to allow the application to open. Calculator may not seem to need such a wait as it opens so quickly. But we have found that even at 100 msec (1/10 second), it sometimes fails to open before the keystrokes are sent.

Step-by-Step Command

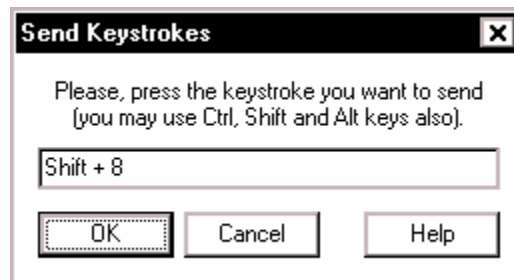
©2006 by Softnet Systems, Inc.

Page 2 of 2

So we have a longer wait of over 200 msec – still almost imperceptible in practice. Select the “Wait” option, “Insert”, then adjust the slider or enter the value.

Next, enter the sales tax. A “Type Text” is appropriate for that. Select “Type Text”, then “Insert”, and then enter the multiplier for the sales tax. For 8.1% sales tax, enter “0.081”.

Next, the multiply operator. Any of the keystroke options will do this job in theory. But if you are using Dragon NaturallySpeaking® defaults, don’t try to use the “*” from the numeric keypad as that is the default character to open the NaturallySpeaking window. We chose the “Keystrokes” option below. Note that the “*” is interpreted as a Shift+8.



Save the command and try it. Calculator should appear, and then you will be able to dictate or type the sales amount, Enter, and the sales tax amount should be displayed.

Keystrokes, Type Text, or Send Keys

With Step-by-Step macros, questions arise about whether to use “Keystrokes”, “Type Text”, or “Send Keys”.

Keystrokes are for SINGLE keystrokes – which can include modifiers such as Shift, Alt, and Ctrl. As you enter the keystroke combination, you don’t have to remember special syntax to use keystrokes.

Type Text is appropriate for straight text – no formatting, just the letters, numbers, and other printing characters.

Send Keys can be used for formatting using Ctrl, Alt, and Shift modifiers “^”, “%”, and “+” respectively. That is, to specify “Ctrl+c” enter “^c”, to specify “Alt+f” enter “%f”, and to specify a percent sign enter “+5”.