Multimedia Fusion 2's stand-alone applications.

   This tutorial explains how to make a stand-alone application so that it can be run on another machine. It explains what files are needed, how to create an Install program, why in some case you should use "Build Application" and not "Build Install Program", what are CCN files, etc…

There are two ways to build a stand-alone application:

1. Use the command "File / Build / Application": this command builds a .exe file. If you want to run your application on another machine, you have to know what files are needed.

2. Use the command "File / Build / Install Program": this command creates an Install program for your application, and copies all the necessary files to a Build directory. This is the solution if you want to make an Install program, but there are some limitations to know. These limitations are explained in this tutorial.

☑ Build / Application

When you "build an application", MMF2 saves a 32 bit executable file. This .exe file includes the data of your main application, the MMF extensions (cox files), and the DLL file(s) of transitions, but does not include the external files used by your application.

🔹If you want to run your application on another machine, you need:

- the .exe file.
- the external files used by your application: these files are used by the objects of your application (e.g. the video files used by the AVI objects, the picture files used by the Picture object, CCN files used by sub-applications, etc…), or by other parts of your application, like the Help file in the Application Properties, or the external files used in actions in the event editor.

You do not need to distribute your MFA (the source) files, they are not used by the stand-alone applications.

You must be careful when using external files in stand-alone applications: these files must be either in the directory (or sub-directories) of your MFA file, or in the directory (or in sub-directories) where you build your application. If you do not follow this rule, then when you will build your stand-alone application you will get probably the message: "Warning: the following files are not in sub-directories of your application, etc...". If you get this message, you can be sure your application won't find these files when you will run it on another machine. This problem doesn't happen when you build an install program with the command "Build / Install Program".

When you make a CD-Rom with your application, you should test it on a machine which doesn't contain any of the external files used by the application, and if possible on a machine where the letter of the CD-Rom drive is different. This way you can be sure that the MMF runtime will find the external files on every machines.

▲ When should you use "Build / Application" instead of "Build / Install Programt":

- When you want to use your own Install program.
- When you main .exe file is big and you do not want to install it on hard disk. The installer of the MMF applications always install the .exe file to hard disk; if you do not want your exe file to be installed, you should build a stand-alone application as indicated above and use an external Install maker like Clickteam's Install Creator!. (Install Creator allows to install shortcuts and Start icons for CD-Rom files).
- When you want to run your application directly from a CD-Rom without Install program.

☑ Build an Install Program

"Build / Install Program" allows you to build an installer for your application. This Install program allows to perform default, normal and full installations, installs screen-savers, installs an icon in the Start menu, installs an uninstaller, etc… Also you have not to worry with the location of your external files.

How to do: create and build your application. Then rebuild your application using File / Build / Install Program. Adjust the settings of your install program (see next topic in this tutorial), then click the "Build Install Program" button: all the files of your application will be copied into a "Build" directory; you have now only to copy this whole directory to a CD-Rom.

▲ When should you use "Build Install Program"?

- When you want to make an installer for your application, and do not want to use an external Install maker like Install Creator.
- When you have external files and do not want to bother with the location of these files.
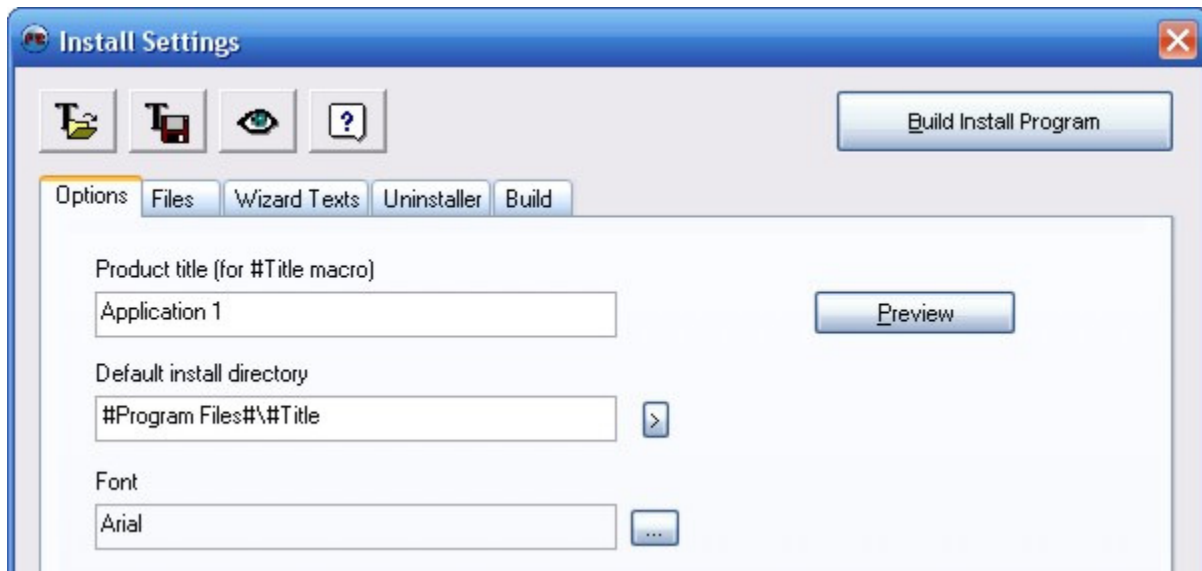- When your application is small and you want to save all your files into only one .exe file.

▲ Limitations:

- the MMF2 Install program always installs to hard disk the .exe file of your application. If this .exe file if big and you do not want to install it, you have either to use sub-applications, or to build a normal stand-alone application and to use an external Install maker like Install Creator.
- If your project contains a lot of sub-applications, it can requires a lot of system resources. In this case, you have to use a normal stand-alone application and an external Install maker. See below the section about CCN files and sub-

applications.

☑ Installer settings

Use the Installer Settings to customize the Install Program. You can select the files to install, the files to keep on your CD-Rom, etc…
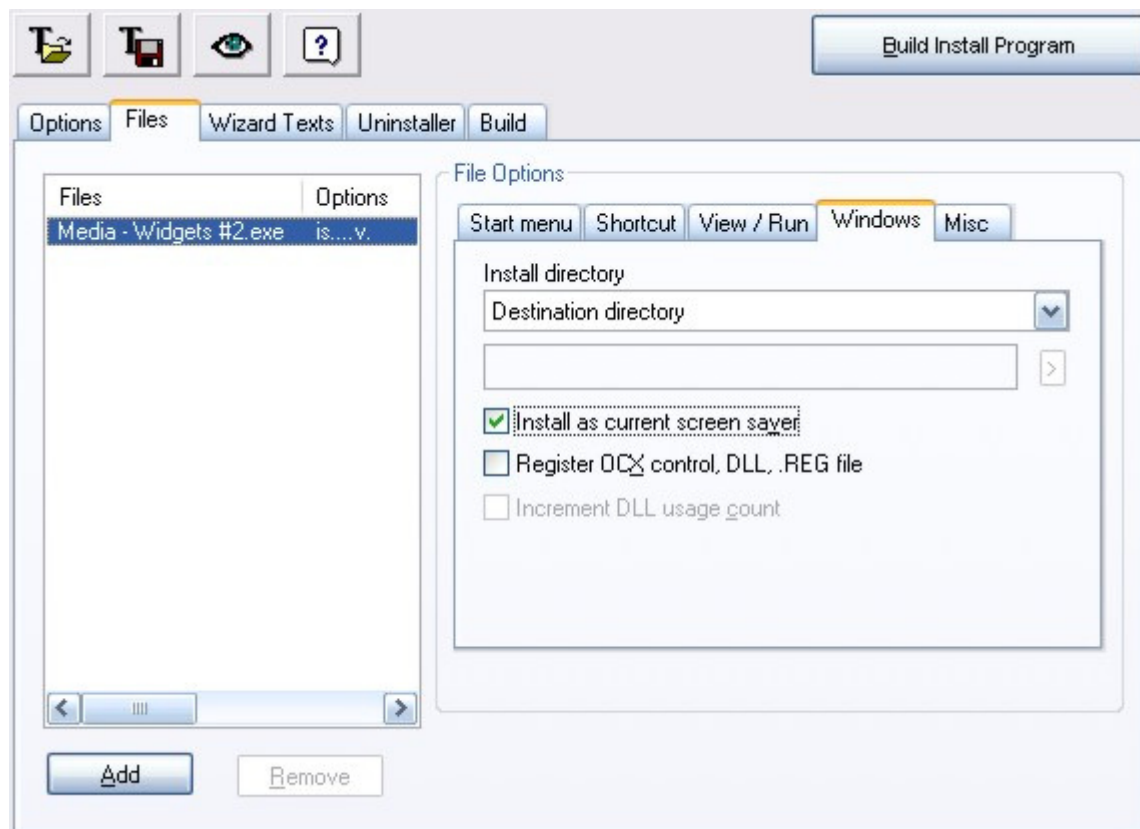

♠ Preview Button 👁

We can not stress how useful the preview button is. This will allow you to run the installer and see every page but will not create folders, update the system registry, or place files on your hard drive.

♠ Screen Saver Installations

Note: if you do not install the current screen saver into the Windows directory, it will appear in the Desktop screen saver list only if it's the current screen saver. If you select another screen saver, then re-open the Desktop properties, your screen saver will disappear from the list. To re-install it as current screen saver, you have to open a file explorer, go to the directory of your screen saver, right-click on the .scr file and select "Install" in the popup menu.

☑ **What does the MMF2 Install program install:**

The MMF2 Install program installs:

- the .exe file of your application,
- the files you have added to the Installation
- the uninstaller: (default name of Uninstall.exe)
- a file called _Del.log, which contains the files to uninstall and the relocation of the filenames so that the MMF runtime can locate your external files.

☑ **Sub-applications and CCN files:**

A CCN file is an MFA file, compressed and without any edition information. When you build an application which contains sub-application objects, MMF2 builds the sub-applications into CCN files.

When you build your main application, you may get the message "The following files are out of date of do not exist..." followed by a list of CCN files: this message is displayed when the CCN files either do not exist or are older than the corresponding MFA files. Always answer Yes, except if you only want test changes in the main application (this will save compilation time).

Note: you can create CCN files manually by changing the file type in the Application "Build Type" properties and then building an application. The CCN files created by this command are usually a little better compressed, but MMF2 takes more time to build them.

Projects and sub-applications

The CCN files are external files like video or picture files, but they are handled differently by the project. If you do not include the sub-applications, MMF won't be able to build the CCN files and/or won't include the extensions (cox files) used by sub-applications.

If your sub-applications are too numerous and you have problems with system resources when you insert them into your project, you should build your application using the command "File / Build / Application" and use an external Install maker like Install Creator.