

Deployment

Setup Projects

You can add a setup project to a solution to create a Windows Installer application for your solution. Setup projects are highly configurable and allow you to create directories on the target computer, copy files, modify the registry, and execute custom actions during installation. When compiled, a setup project produces an .msi file, which incorporates a setup wizard for the application. The .msi file can be distributed by disk, download, or file share. When it is clicked, the .msi file launches the application setup wizard and installs the application.

TO ADD A SETUP PROJECT TO YOUR SOLUTION

1. From the File menu, choose Add and then New Project to open the Add New Project dialog box.
2. In the Project Types pane, expand Other Project Types, and then click Setup And Deployment.
3. In the Templates pane, click Setup Project, and then click OK.

Setup Project Editors

Each setup project includes six editors that allow you to configure the contents and the behavior of the setup project. These editors are:

1. **File System Editor** Allows you to configure the installation of your application to the file system of the target computer.
2. **Registry Editor** Allows you to write entries to the registry upon installation.
3. **File Types Editor** Allows you to set associations between applications and file types.

4. **User Interface Editor** Allows you to edit the user interface seen during installation for both regular installation and administrative installation.
5. **Custom Actions Editor** Allows you to define custom actions to be performed during installation.
6. **Launch Conditions Editor** Allows you to set conditions for launching the installation of your setup project.

You can open any of these editors by selecting the deployment project in Solution Explorer and then selecting the appropriate editor from the View menu.

Adding Files to a Setup Project with the File System Editor

The File System Editor represents the file system on the target computer. You can add output files to various directories, create new directories on the target computer, or create and add shortcuts to the target computer. Figure 10-1 shows the File System Editor.

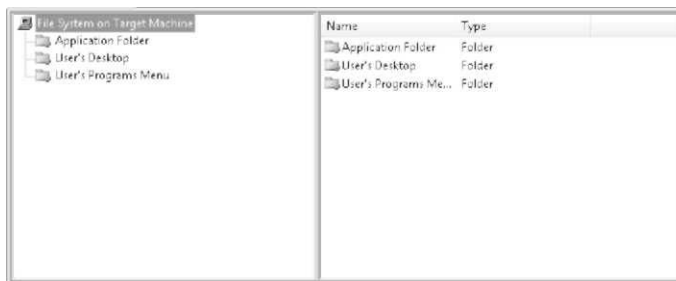
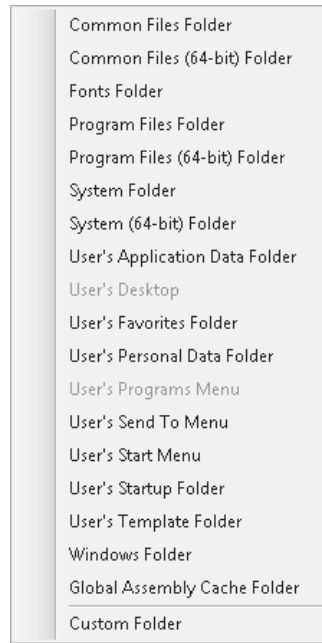


FIGURE 10-1 The File System Editor

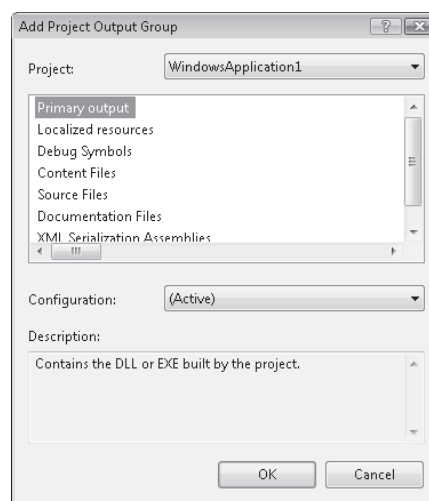
The File System Editor is split into two panes. The left pane represents the directory structure of the target computer. Each folder in the left pane represents a folder on the target computer that exists or will be created by the setup application. The right pane displays the contents of the directory that is selected in the left pane. Initially, the File System Editor consists of three folders: Application Folder, User's Desktop, and User's Program Menu. You can change the folder for a particular file by selecting the file in the right pane and dragging it to the appropriate folder.

You can add folders to the File System Editor by right-clicking the left pane and choosing Add Special Folder. The shortcut menu pictured in Next Figure appears. Using this menu, you can add a special folder to the File System Editor or create your own custom folder. If you choose a custom folder, this folder will be created in the target computer's file system upon installation.



TO ADD OUTPUT FROM A PROJECT TO A DEPLOYMENT PROJECT

1. Right-click Application Folder in the left-hand pane of the File System Editor, choose Add, and then choose Project Output. The Add Project Output Group dialog box (pictured in next Figure) opens.



2. Choose the project outputs that you want to add to your setup project. All .exe and .dll files created by the project are contained in Primary Output. You can also add other project files to your setup project, such as localized resources, content files, or documentation files, or, less frequently, debug symbols, source files, or Extensible Markup Language (XML) serialization assemblies. Once you have selected the output to be added to the folder, click OK.

TO CREATE A SHORTCUT AND ADD IT TO THE TARGET COMPUTER

1. In the right-hand pane of the File System Editor, right-click the file for which you want to create a shortcut and choose Create Shortcut. A shortcut to the file is created and added to the pane.
2. Drag the shortcut from the right-hand pane to the appropriate folder in the left-hand pane.

Configuring the Setup Project to Add an Icon During Setup

You can use the File System Editor to associate an icon with your application at installation. Shortcuts to your application will be displayed with the icon you specify.

TO ASSOCIATE AN ICON WITH AN APPLICATION AT SETUP

1. In the File System Editor, right-click a folder, choose Add, and then select File. The Add Files dialog box opens.
2. Browse to the .ico file you want to associate with a shortcut and click Add to add it to your setup project.
3. Create a shortcut to your application as previously described.
4. In the File System Editor, select the shortcut.
5. In the Properties window, select the Icon property, and then choose (Browse...) from the dropdown list. Browse to the icon you want to associate with your application. Select the icon and click OK.

Configuring a Deployment Project to Deploy the .NET Framework

All applications created with Visual Studio 2008 require .NET Framework 3.5 to run. If you are uncertain of the deployment environment for your applications, you can configure your setup project to install prerequisites like the .NET Framework as part of the installation. The .NET Framework is configured to be installed by default, but the following procedure allows you to verify that this configuration is still valid.

TO CONFIGURE A DEPLOYMENT PROJECT TO DEPLOY THE .NET FRAMEWORK

1. In Solution Explorer, select the setup project.
2. From the Project menu, click Properties. The <project> Property Pages dialog box opens.
3. In the <project> Properties dialog box, click Prerequisites to open the Prerequisites dialog box.
4. If it is not already selected, select the check box labeled Create Setup Program To Install Prerequisite Components.
5. In the Choose Which Prerequisites To Install list, select the check box labeled .NET Framework 3.5.
6. In the group labeled Specify The Install Location For Prerequisites, select the option button labeled Download Prerequisites From The Component Vendor's Web Site.
7. Click OK, and then close the <project> Property Pages dialog box.