JustShowPictures XML – Slideshow Flash (AS2) Component V1.0

Description

Lightning JustShowPictures is a super lightweight, animated picture sliding component which loads content dynamically from external XML. The XML data file can be exchanged per script to load new content (data sets) on the fly. The count of items to display is theoretically unlimited. The smart component is written in a way that keeps all client side resources small and always performs efficient because it loads the picture resources on demand.

Users can navigate thru the content and click on interesting preview images to zoom into larger pictures with auto scrolling ability on mouse movement. Pictures can have any size and will be automatically resized to fit into available preview areas (which are defined at design time). The content is loaded on demand, so practically no large preloading is required to display successively bigger data sets of pictures.

There is the possibility to switch the component to auto sliding mode and a set of properties, functions and events which allow controlling many aspects of advanced user interaction. The XML data file can be extended to integrate even more tags for enhanced program logic and additional parameters by the developer.

The component easily integrates into your own flash applications and the example file can be used as it, providing easy to use external picture viewers or HTML overlays or similar.

Lightning JustShowPictures is fully functional and has no limitations. For developers who want to change the visual appearance or add new functionality to the component, there is also a special development

package available, which delivers the complete sources, including 3 professional grade Lightning components for modification and usage with your own application projects.

Licenses

Lightning JustShowPictures is available for free in an unlimited number of personal projects. Any commercial usage requires a purchased license because we think this would be only fair rather than give you the chance to earn lots of money with our developments.

Usage Limitations

The component is not allowed be used (embedded) to develop new components or applications which are distributed and/or sold in any way under different copyright. Redistribution of the component itself (i.e. download from your private website) is also not allowed and always requires special permission and relationship.

Requirements

The component requires at least Flash player 8 and ActionScript 2 and authoring environment Flash 8 or CS series and higher. The files inside the package are created or saved as Adobe CS4 files. (In some situations you can get older file versions from us on demand.)

Content

The downloaded zipped package usually contains several subfolders:

documentation – descriptive documents in text, PDF and/or SWF format.

component – the component package in Adobe / Macromedia Extension (*.mxp) Format and native component format (*.swc) for optional manual installation.

examples – possibly several demonstration files and other material

Installation

Installation of the JustShowPictures Flash component is quite easy. Unzip the downloaded package and simply click on the *.mxp file or open the file explicitly with Adobe / Macromedia Extension Manager. The application will install the component with some simple steps and after restarting the Flash authoring environment (or reloading the component palette) you will be

able to select the component from it. Please use always the latest version of Extension Manager (which is part of the Adobe / Macromedia installation packages).

Remark: Extension Manager Bug. If you use Adobe Creative Suites in a different language than your operating system, you have to load the Extension Manager from inside your Flash application to install the components into the right locations.

Updating / upgrading: It is a well known fact, that installing new versions of *any* Flash components does NOT replace component instances inside existing projects automatically. You always have to replace existing library symbols in *all* your files manually to exchange/update the embedded component code.

Usage

Usage of JustShowPictures is similar easy and straightforward. Drag and drop the component from the Flash component library onto the stage. Please edit the parameter(s) with the Flash authoring environment property inspector to fit your needs.

Parameters

Component properties are shown inside Flash's property inspector if you click on a component on stage. The following component properties are available with JustShowPictures:

allowOpen – This boolean property specifies whether a preview picture does open (enlarge to view mode) on clicking it or by calling per script. The OnOpen() event is still executed, so you can define your own actions if someone tries to open a picture and this property was set to "false". Is the value "false", preview mode remains and nothing happens visually instead of changing to enlarged view mode. Default value is "true".

animationSpeed – This property is a number which sets the animation interval in milliseconds. The larger the interval, the slower the animation occurs. Default value is 30 milliseconds (quite fast).

autoslide – This is also a number. 0 means no autoslide (disabled). Any value above 0 sets the autoslide interval in seconds. Default value is 0 (off). If you want a 5 seconds automatic slide, set this property to 5.

itemRotation – The preview items can be rotated to make them visually more interesting in our "rectangular browser world". This property's value is a number in degrees (can be negative too). Default value is 10 degrees (rotated clockwise).

itemScaling – The size of the preview items can be set with this number. It should be seen as a decimal scaling factor, which means, 0.75 is the default and scales the item to 3/4 (or 75%) of the original size (which is then 550x420 pixels).

xmlPath – This is the location of the external XML file. If you use sub directories, always use the forward slash (/), never the Windows specific backwards slash for compatibility with Macintosh and (other) UNIX like platforms. You can use relative and absolute paths (i.e. URLs). Please note, that Flash's security policies may limit the validity of external path loading calls. Please read the Macromedia/Adobe articles about Flash Player security issues for further information.

Scripting

If you place components on the stage they are instantiated. If you give them a name, you can access inbuilt functions of the components with the dot (.) operator. The following functions for runtime interaction are available with JustShowPictures:

function Next() : Void – Programmatically slides to the next picture. This is called internally if the user clicks on the forwards button.

function Previous() : Void – Programmatically slides to the previous picture. This is called internally if the user clicks on the backwards button.

function Open() : Void – Programmatically opens the picture into the viewer mode. This is called internally if the user clicks on any preview item.

function Close() : Void – Programmatically closes the viewer mode. This is called internally if the user clicks on the close button.

function Reset() : Void – Rewinds the items to index 0 (the first item).

function Clear() : Void – Frees (empties) all resources of the component. After doing that you won't see any pictures or data but a none-visual component. It is useful to free all resources if you want to suspend the component. If you merely want to reload data, you do not need to call this function prior.

function GetXMLParameter(param:String) : Void – You can call this function to get any (even user defined) tags from the XML data file for the current item. This is always the data from to the current displayed (active) item. See XLM data specification below.

function Load(path:String) : Void – Load or Reload a new dataset. You do not have to call any cleanup prior, it is done automatically.

Events are (mostly empty) functions which are executed from within the components to indicate certain states. You can override such functions to execute your own actions as a reaction to these state changes (mostly caused by user interaction or internal or timer events). The following events are available:

function OnNext(uid:String) : Void –

function OnPrevious(uid:String) : Void –

function OnOpen(uid:String) : Void –

function OnClose(uid:String) : Void –

You can redefine these functions. The function names should be descriptive enough. These events are also fired, if the functions above are called programmatically (Next(), Open(), Close() and so on).

 (For examples please see the included files.)

XML Data Format

You can easily open and edit XML files with any text editor. The XML data file structure is quite simple and generic. There are only few tags essentially required. These are the <uid> tag, the <name> tag and the <path> tag. A basic valid XML skeleton for the component looks like this:


```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<items>
<item>
<uid>1</uid>
<name><![CDATA[name1]]></name>
< path >images/test2.jpg</ path >
<description><![CDATA[description for item 1]]></description>
</item>
<item>...</item>
</items>
```


Those first 3 tags are required to ensure functionality of the component itself. Parameters are wrapped by <item> tags, which are all children of the <items> tag. Please note, that the <uid> tag is a string and also handled this way by the component internally. It must be **unique**! Otherwise the iteration over elements inside the component may not work as expected.

You can extend the XML file and add additional tags for usage in your own application. In example you could add an <picture> tag for a larger image to each item. If the user selects or clicks an item you could display that resource with your own code or open a new window or a link or similar internal and/or external actions. Please take a look at the scripting section above to see how you can receive user defined tags with ActionScript 2 from the component (see function GetXMLParameter()).

Item count can be virtually unlimited but to keep good performance we recommend using no more than 100 items at once. If you want to display

unlimited count of items it would be better to refresh the XML data file from time to time dynamically with server services or server scripting and update the components content accordingly (i.e. creating a "category" system).

Support

JustShowPictures is currently exclusively distributed by us. With purchased components you usually have 30 days installation support and get latest information and updates directly from us. You can also contact the authors directly via webmaster@dizainer.net or explore additional resources on http://flash.dizainer.net.

Registering and Updates

Please consider registering your component via direct support address above to get free updates, additional services and useful information (free offers and so on). We do not spam you with e-mails nor do we share your addresses.

Addendum

Please note that our developments aren't fixed blocks of code. We provide individual customizing of components and complete realization of entire projects including integration. We are specialized to connect Flash client side applications, websites and multimedia projects with server side program logic to provide content with highest amount of interactivity, functionality and design in bleeding fast time. We also develop native client side applications based on flash and C++ for all platforms. You can always contact us with your projects and we will make you a customized special offer.

Thank you very much for being interested in us and our components. We wish you great success with your own Flash projects.

Sunday, 22. August 2010
LIGHTNING – Flash Design & Components
Germany

Jason Webs
Lead Developer

Email: webmaster@x-plorer.net
Website: http://flash.dizainer.net