Writing Searchable Plugins

by

The Dwarf Horde

The Plugin Browser plugin was designed to make plugins easier to locate and identify, especially when a large collection of plugins is installed.

The Plugin Browser plugin does this by allowing the User to search alphabetically by plugin name, keyword(s), author or menu location. Included in these searches are the Plugin Title and Description.

Plugin Browser plugin gives the User the ability to Bookmark their favorite plugins and add their comments to bookmarked plugins so they can identify it and make notes about its use.

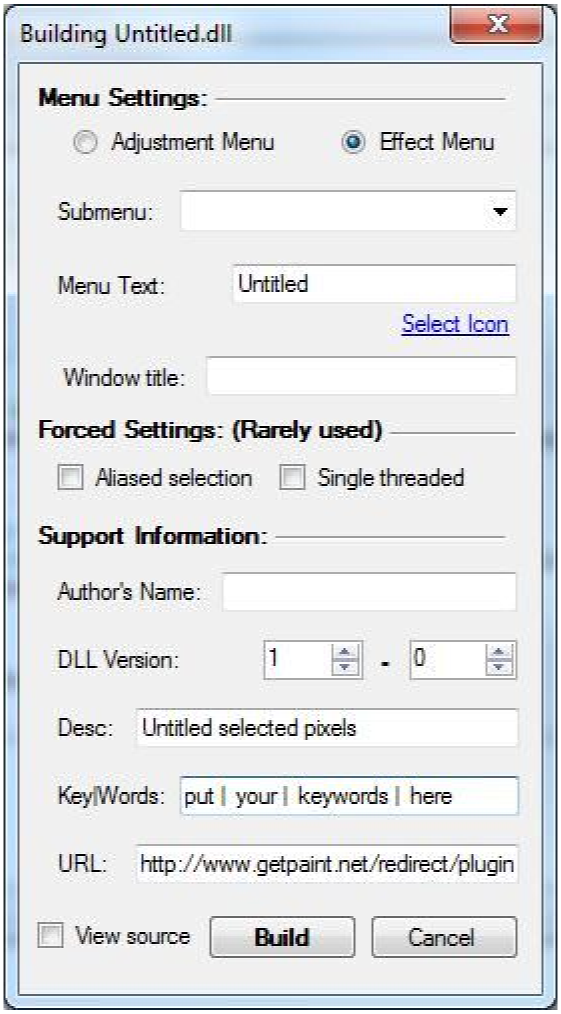
As well as being a search tool, the Plugin Browser is capable of displaying an embedded image which we call the Preview Image. The idea of the Preview Image is to give the User a visual clue to the plugin's function. In most cases the Preview Image will be an example of the effect or adjustment.

CodeLab

Keywords can be added to plugins written in BoltBait's CodeLab 2.x by adding them to the new Keywords field.

Multiple keywords are separated with a pipe "|" symbol. See the field label for an example.

CodeLab includes a Description field which is used to provide a short description of the plugin. Plugin Browser will include this field when searching, so an accurate, concise description will help Users find your plugin.



Building Untitled.dll

Menu Settings:

○ Adjustment Menu ● Effect Menu

Submenu:

Menu Text: Untitled

Window title:

Forced Settings: (Rarely used)

□ Aliased selection □ Single threaded

Support Information:

Author's Name:

DLL Version: 1 - 0

Desc: Untitled selected pixels

Key|Words: put | your | keywords | here

URL: http://www.getpaint.net/redirect/plugin

□ View source

Preview images can also be added via CodeLab 2.x. To include one all you need to do is add the correct file to the source directory along with an icon file.

Create a preview image which shows off your effect. Make the image 200px wide and 150px high.

Save it as a PNG to the directory with your source file and icon. The format of the filename is critical (as is the presence of an icon file). The filename of the preview image should share the same name as your source file with the extension `.sample.png`

`Beardy.cs`	the source code
`Beardy.png`	the icon for your effect
`Beardy.sample.png`	the sample image

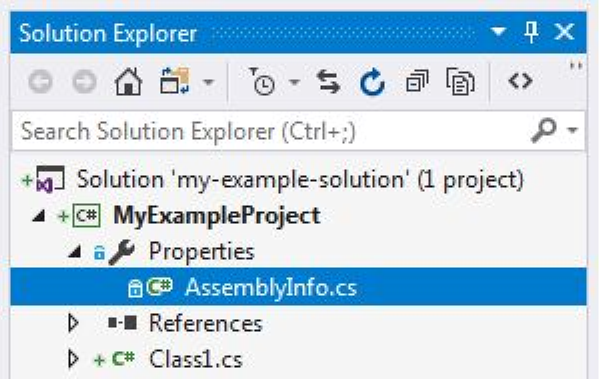
If you follow this format, CodeLab will automatically find and include both the icon and the preview image when you build the effect.

Visual Studio

Plugins written in Visual Studio can include keywords, a description, and a 200 x 150 px preview image.

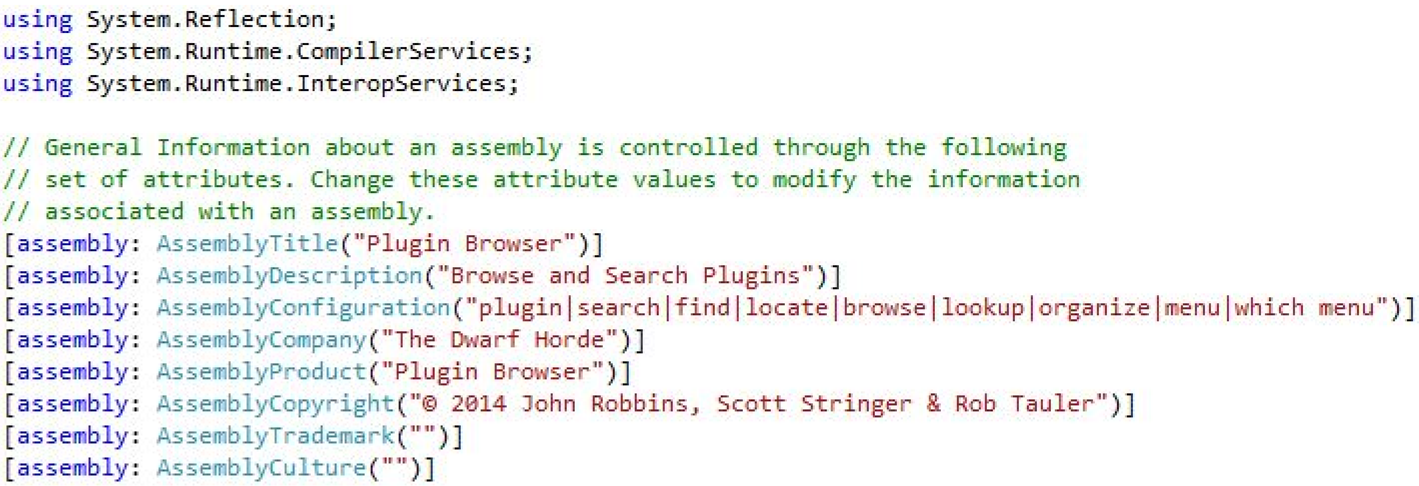
Adding Keywords and Description

1. Open the file containing the **`AssemblyInfo`** (usually `AssemblyInfo.cs`)



2. Add your keywords in the **`AssemblyConfiguration`** field. Separate keywords with pipe symbols or commas.

3. Add your Description in the **`AssemblyDescription`** field.



```
using System.Reflection;
using System.Runtime.CompilerServices;
using System.Runtime.InteropServices;

// General Information about an assembly is controlled through the following
// set of attributes. Change these attribute values to modify the information
// associated with an assembly.
[assembly: AssemblyTitle("Plugin Browser")]
[assembly: AssemblyDescription("Browse and Search Plugins")]
[assembly: AssemblyConfiguration("plugin|search|find|locate|browse|lookup|organize|menu|which menu")]
[assembly: AssemblyCompany("The Dwarf Horde")]
[assembly: AssemblyProduct("Plugin Browser")]
[assembly: AssemblyCopyright("© 2014 John Robbins, Scott Stringer & Rob Tauler")]
[assembly: AssemblyTrademark("")]
[assembly: AssemblyCulture("")]
```

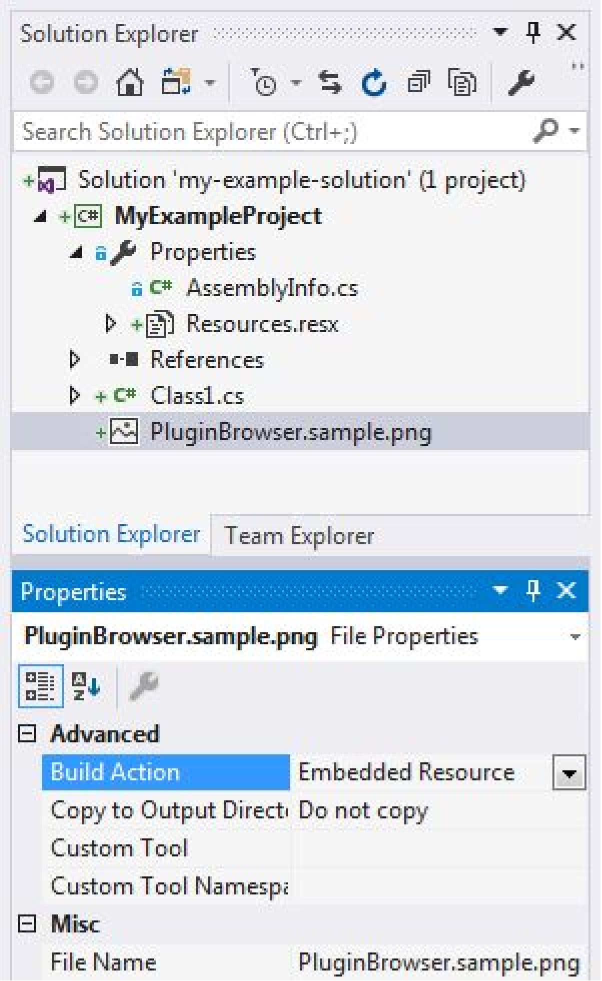
Adding Preview Image

1. Create a 200 x 150 px image that represents your plugin. Save the file as a PNG (GIF will also work). Include “`.sample.`” in the filename. For example: `PluginBrowser.sample.png`

2. In the Solution Explorer, right-click on the project name, and select **Add** -> **Existing Item...** Properties.

3. Find and select the added image.

4. In the Solution Explorer select your image file and change the **Build Action** to **Embedded Resource**.



PluginBrowser.sample.png File Properties

Advanced	
Build Action	Embedded Resource
Copy to Output Directi	Do not copy
Custom Tool	
Custom Tool Namespa	
Misc	
File Name	PluginBrowser.sample.png