

SlideShowPro Director User Guide

(for v.1.09)



slideshowpro
DIRECTOR

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Introduction

Thank you for purchasing SlideShowPro Director -- the easiest way to manage, edit, and publish images for SlideShowPro.

This user guide contains all the instructions you need to install and use Director. It was written to get you up and running quickly, as well as answer common questions you may have along the way.

If you run into problems, visit the SlideShowPro Director forums at <http://www.slideshowpro.net/forums/>.

Let's get started!

Installation

STEP ONE: UPLOAD DIRECTOR

In the same directory as this user guide is a folder titled `ssp_director`. Using the FTP program of your choice, upload `ssp_director` to your web server in any location you like. From this point on, we'll assume you uploaded the folder to `http://www.myserver.com/ssp_director/`

STEP TWO: SET UP THE DATABASE

Director requires a MySQL database. It is perfectly acceptable to use an existing MySQL database. Director cannot create the database for you -- it must be created through your hosting provider. (Please contact your web host if you have questions regarding this).

Once your database is ready, collect these four pieces of information:

1. **MySQL Host Name** (e.g. `mysql.myserver.com` or `localhost`)
2. **MySQL Database** - The name of the database you want Director to use.
3. **MySQL User name** - The user name to login to your MySQL host.
4. **MySQL Password** - The password for this user name.

STEP THREE: INSTALL DIRECTOR

Open `http://www.myserver.com/ssp_director/` in your web browser. You will be asked to agree to the software license agreement. If you agree with the terms, click "I agree."

Next, Director will run a server compatibility test to ensure your server meets the necessary basic requirements. If all goes well, you will be prompted to continue.

The next step is where you use the MySQL information gathered above. Enter this data into the appropriate fields. When finished, click the "Start Install" button.

Note: The "MySQL Table Prefix" setting is an advanced option, and should only be modified if you have a table naming conflict. Otherwise, leave this alone.

Upon success, the next step is to enter a user name and password. When complete, click the "Install Director" button.

The results of the installation will be displayed on the next page. Director created several tables in the database for storing data, as well as your user profile. You may now login with the user name and password you created on the preceding page.

Installation is complete! Let's move on to creating your first album.

Setup

STEP ONE: CREATE AN ALBUM

SlideShowPro and SlideShowPro Director organize your images using “albums.” One or more albums are part of a “gallery.” To put it in real-world terms, an album would be a book of photos, and the gallery would be the shelf you place your books on.

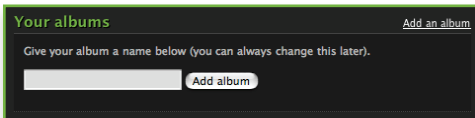


Figure 1: Add an album interface

To upload images into Director, you must first create an album. On the Dashboard tab you’ll see a column on the left with a header that reads “Your albums.” Click on the white “Add an album” text link on the right. (Figure 1)

Enter an album name in the input field and click the “Add album” button. Upon completion you will be redirected to the “Edit album” tab, with the “Upload content” secondary tab automatically selected.

STEP TWO: ADD CONTENT

Now we’ll upload album content. You may upload full size images, thumbnails, an album thumbnail, and/or audio for your album (Figure 2). All of these content pieces may be uploaded in one batch.

Select the type of content you wish to upload, then click the “Browse” button.

Your operating system will open a window to browse your computer. Navigate to the content type you wish to upload, and Command (OS X) / CTRL (Windows) click on as many files as you want.

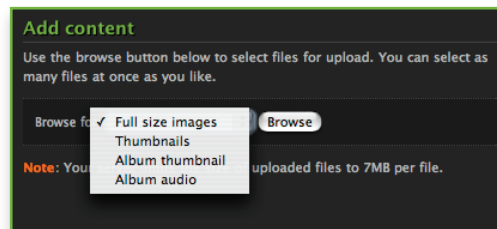


Figure 2: Add content

Note: If you are publishing a slide show for Flash Player 7 you should only upload JPGs. If Flash Player 8, you may upload JPGs, GIFs, or PNGs. In both cases the optimized image Director creates will be in the same image format as the original.

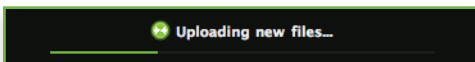


Figure 3: Image upload progress dialog

Director will display a “File list” on the right with the files you selected. To remove a file, click the red “Remove” button. To add more, click on “Browse” again. When complete click “Upload.” A progress dialog will appear (Figure 3).

The green line on the bottom expands as files are uploaded. When complete, the dialog will display “done” and automatically transfer you to the appropriate secondary tab (depending on the type of content you uploaded).

Note: If you would prefer to upload your content via FTP see the “Tips” section.

STEP THREE: EDIT IMAGES

If you uploaded images in Step Two, Director will automatically redirect you to the “Edit images” tab for editing image attributes and order.

Image attributes

To edit an image caption, hyperlink, and other attributes, click its edit icon. A window containing form inputs will slide down from above. Enter your data and click “Save” when finished.

Note: If you’d rather not edit your image attributes one by one, you may apply hyperlinks and captions to all of your images through the “Generate content” tab. More on that in Step Four.

Image order

Director offers two modes for image order: manual (default) and automatic. To manually adjust image order, drag and drop photos into the order you need. A counter in the lower left of each photo will update to reflect its position.

Automatic sorting options include “File name,” “Date (newest first)” and “Date (oldest first).” When any of these options are selected, Director will automatically sort the photos you just uploaded and any new photos you add down the road.

Image deletion

Click an image’s delete icon to permanently remove it from your album.

STEP FOUR: GENERATE CONTENT

The “Generate content” tab is for publishing web-optimized copies of the images you uploaded, as well as for globally editing image attributes.

Image processing

Click “Edit” next to the type of image you need to generate. An input area (Figure 4) will appear containing inputs for the maximum image width and height you want your photos to be, an input to control image quality (number between 0 and 100), and two scaling options: “Proportional” and “Crop to fill.”

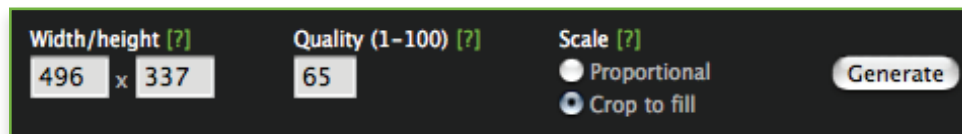


Figure 4: Image processing dialog

“Proportional” scaling means that Director will downscale your images so that neither their height nor width are greater than the maximum width and height you enter. “Crop to fill” will proportionally scale your images to the maximum width and height you enter, then crop out the center area. This latter option gives all your photos a uniform width and height, regardless of their original aspect ratio.

Behind the scenes, Director will move your original photos to a new folder named “hr” and generate new, web-optimized images using your target dimensions. Your original photos will be used whenever you generate new images. Director will also save the “Image processing” information you entered, and automatically reuse them whenever more images are added to your album.

Note: Image processing is dependent on your web server’s memory allocation. If you receive errors, you may need to contact your host to find out what memory limits apply and if/how they can be changed.

Album thumbnail

After you have processed thumbnail images you may designate one of them as the album thumbnail.

To assign a thumbnail to your album, click the “Select” link to open the drawer. Select any image by clicking on it.

Next you will need to resize your chosen image. Click the “Resize” link. You will be presented with an interface identical to the “Image processing” interface. Enter the maximum image width and height for the thumbnail, a quality setting between 0 and 100, choose either “Proportional” or “Crop to fill” for scaling, and click “Generate.”

Note: If you would rather upload your own album thumbnail, click the “Upload” link. You will be redirected to the Upload Content tab.

Image attributes

This area contains three optional attributes you may globally assign to all your album images -- “Titles,” “Hyperlinks,” and “Captions.”

Titles are an optional caption header in SlideShowPro (set through the “Caption Header Type” Component Inspector parameter). To populate all your album images with titles, click “Edit” and enter a global value or tag to make each title unique. Then click “Populate.”

Hyperlinks are assigned to each slide show image and are loaded in the browser when clicked. To automatically link each image to its original version click

“Populate” and then assign which browser window it should open in. If you’d like to popup your hyperlinked images in a chromeless window, click the “Populate (js)” button.

Captions appear in SlideShowPro using one of the available “Show Captions” parameters in the Component Inspector. To populate all your album images with captions, click “Edit” and enter a global value or tag to make each title unique. Then click “Populate.”

STEP FOUR: EDIT INFO

Next click on the “Edit info” secondary tab. The album title you assigned in Step One is already assigned. Enter a description for your album and click “Save changes.” You also have the following options available:

Album options

To display the album title and description in SlideShowPro’s gallery, toggle the “Show album title & description in slide show” option on or off. To display thumbnails, toggle the “Show thumbnails in slide show” option on or off.

STEP FIVE (OPTIONAL): AUDIO

If you would like to playback an MP3 as background music / narration for this album (and you didn’t upload one in Step Two), click on the “Upload content” tab. Follow the instructions in Step Two to upload an audio file.

Next click on the “Audio” tab. If your MP3 upload was successful, you will be offered a drop-down to select the MP3 file you wish to use. Give your audio a short caption (this will appear in SlideShowPro’s audio player), then click “Save changes.”

STEP SIX: CONFIGURE SLIDESHOWPRO

Now that you have successfully created an album, it’s time to configure SlideShowPro to use Director.

Click on the “Dashboard” tab in Director. In the right column is an area titled “Your galleries.” This area is where you manage your galleries (see the “Galleries” section for more information). Director creates a default gallery for you named “All active albums.” This gallery contains all albums that are active in the “Your albums” area of the Dashboard. Copy to your clipboard the XML File Path under the “All active albums” header.

Note: If you haven’t done so already, read the beginning of the “Your first slide show” section of the SlideShowPro User Guide (http://www.slideshowpro.net/user_guide).

php) for component setup instructions. You will need an instance of SlideShowPro in an FLA in order to complete this walkthrough.

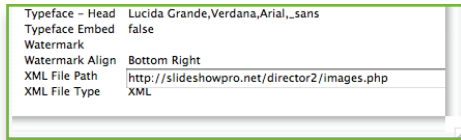


Figure 5: Component Inspector in Flash

Open the FLA containing SlideShowPro in Flash. Click on the instance of SlideShowPro on the stage, and open the Component Inspector panel. At the bottom is a parameter named “XML File Path.” Replace “images.xml” with the copied file path (Figure 5).

Publish your movie -- your albums should be loading from Director! You may now upload your SWF/HTML to any directory on your web site and it will retrieve your Director images.

STEP SEVEN: BOOKMARK SLIDE SHOW

Director offers a handy bookmarking system so you may preview your Director changes in your slide show. To bookmark a slide show, click on the “Dashboard” tab in Director, and look for an “Edit” link to the right of the “Your slide shows” header. Click this link. On the next page, give your slide show a title and an absolute path to the HTML document that’s embedding the SWF (e.g., <http://www.yourdomain.com/slideshow.html>).

When complete, click “Add Link.” A drop-down containing the bookmark link you just added will appear in Director’s header. Select this whenever you want to preview changes.

DONE

See, that wasn’t so bad! By now you should have at least one album of images loading in your slide show. If you ran into trouble somewhere along the way though, check out the Troubleshooting section at the end of this Guide, or visit the Director forums at <http://slideshowpro.net/forums/>.

Repeat these steps whenever you need to add more albums.

Galleries

Galleries allow you to group albums together in one slide show. Any active album may be added to gallery, and you may create as many galleries as you need. This section will walk you through the process of setting up your first gallery. Whenever you need more, simply repeat these steps.

STEP ONE: CREATE A GALLERY

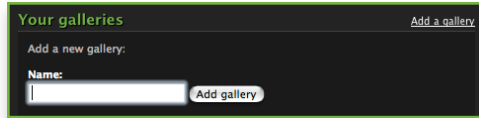


Figure 6: Add an gallery interface

Go to Director's Dashboard. Click the "Add a gallery" link to the right of the "Your galleries" header. Enter a gallery name in the input field, then click "Add gallery." (Figure 6)

After a couple of seconds, the "Your galleries" area will update to include your new gallery. Click the "Edit" link next to the gallery you just created.

You are now in the "Edit gallery" tab. Here you can revise the gallery name and add/delete albums. By default you start with no albums. Add albums by clicking the "Add" link next to an album under the "Albums not in this gallery" header.

Continue adding and removing albums until you have the right set you wish to display in your slide show. To change the album order, simply drag and drop the albums into the order you want them to appear.

STEP TWO: CONFIGURE SLIDESHOWPRO

Linking SlideShowPro to your gallery is the same process as Step Six in the previous "Setup" section. Simply copy your gallery's XML File Path from either the "Edit gallery" tab for a gallery, or from the "Your galleries" area on the Dashboard, and paste it into the "XML File Path" field in SlideShowPro's Component Inspector panel.

DONE

Publish a new SWF from Flash, and your slide show will appear with content from your new gallery.

Importing existing galleries

If you have an existing gallery with SlideShowPro and would like to import that gallery into Director, you're in luck! Director includes a utility for importing images, audio files, and XML data from existing slide shows. Here's how you do it.

Note: If you would like to watch a video of this process, a QuickTime screencast is available here: http://slideshowpro.net/mov/screencast/director_import.mov

STEP ONE: UPLOAD CONTENT

Using your FTP client, open a connection to your server and navigate to the `ssp_director` directory. Once there, open `albums/imports`. Inside `imports` create a new folder named anything you like. For this walkthrough, we'll name it "My Import."

Note: if you don't see a folder named "imports" inside "albums," you will need to create one first.

Upload your XML file and imagery folder to `albums/imports/My Import/`. You do not need to upload your SWF, HTML, or FLA.

Finally, make sure the XML file you uploaded is named "images.xml." Director will not be able to find your XML file if named otherwise. You may edit this on the server side through your FTP client.

STEP TWO: IMPORT GALLERY INTO DIRECTOR

Open your web browser and navigate to your Director installation. At the Dashboard, click on the "Import a gallery" link to the right of the "Your galleries" header. The next screen will ask you to name the gallery you are importing, and to select which gallery you would like to import. When finished click "Import gallery," then click "Ok" to confirm.

STEP THREE: LINK EXISTING SLIDE SHOW TO NEW GALLERY

When Director completes the import process it will redirect back to the Dashboard tab. You should see new albums in the "Your albums" area, plus the gallery you named in Step Two under "Your galleries." Copy the XML file path under the "My First Import" header.

Open the FLA you used to publish the slide show you imported. Paste the XML file path as the value of the "XML File Path" parameter in the Component Inspector panel. Publish a new SWF, and you'll see a slide show that's identical to the one you had before, except now you're managing it with the convenience and speed of SlideShowPro Director!

Note: You may now safely delete the "My Import" folder created in Step One.

Profile management

YOUR USER PROFILE

You can edit the specifics of your user profile at any time by clicking “Profile” in the upper right hand corner of the SlideShowPro Director interface. From this page you can change the username and password you use to login.

MANAGING USERS

If you are the user that initially installed Director, there will be a “Manage users” link in the upper right hand corner of the Director interface.

The Manage users interface allows you to give other users access (with varying permissions) to your Director installation. Director allows three different user groups:

Editors - Can edit any album attribute, but cannot add or delete anything.

Contributors - Same permissions as editors, along with the ability to add or delete albums, images or dynamic galleries.

Administrators - All of the permissions of both editors and contributors, along with the ability to manage users.

Note: Only the original installer can administer users who have Administrators permissions. Subsequent users given administrators permissions can only manage users with Editor or Contributor status.

To change a user’s permissions, or delete their access altogether, use the “Your users” area.

Upgrading

Upgrades to SlideShowPro Director are available through the member area of our web site. To download, open your web browser and go to: <http://www.slideshowpro.net/usersys/member.php>. Login to your member account, then click on the “SlideShowPro Director” text link under the “Your product purchases” header. That’ll take you to the product download page.

Once downloaded, decompress the package by double-clicking on it. Open the “upgrade.txt” file found at the root level and follow the instructions contained therein.

When the upload is complete, login to Director like you normally do. Director will automatically redirect you to an upgrade page to confirm.

That’s it! You may now continue to use Director.

Tip: Keep an eye on the footer of your SlideShowPro Director installation. A link to upgrade will appear whenever a new version is available.

Tips

This section of the User Guide contains various usability tips you may use when working with SlideShowPro Director.

UPLOAD CONTENT VIA FTP

If you would prefer to upload an album's content via FTP than through Director's "Upload content" utility, you may do so by following these steps:

1. Create an album in Director
2. Navigate to your Director installation via FTP and find that album's `lg` folder on the server. Upload your original images there.
3. Return to Director and click the "Edit" link next to the album you just created.
4. Click the album's "Upload content" tab.

Director will automatically recognize the images you uploaded and add them to your album.

Troubleshooting

IMAGES WON'T LOAD FROM A WEB SITE OUTSIDE OF DIRECTOR

By default, the Flash Player has a security wall that prevents the loading of data from a domain that is different from the one a SWF resides on. In other words, if your SWF were hosted on `www.mydomain.com` and your installation of Director were on `www.myotherdomain.com`, then the SWF wouldn't have permission to load images from Director.

So how do you grant permission? It's done with what's called a "crossdomain policy file." It's a simple XML file that the Flash Player automatically looks for at the outside domain (the one Director is installed at), and if the file grants permission to the domain hosting your SWF, your images are allowed to load.

Here's what you do. In your favorite text editor, create a new file and name it `crossdomain.xml` (it *must* be named this). Then add the following:

```
<cross-domain-policy>
  <allow-access-from domain="" />
  <allow-access-from domain="" />
</cross-domain-policy>
```

This is the basic template. In the `domain` attribute, add the domain where your SWF resides. For example:

```
<cross-domain-policy>
  <allow-access-from domain="www.mydomain.com" />
  <allow-access-from domain="mydomain.com" />
</cross-domain-policy>
```

Notice that the domain is listed twice -- once with `www` and once without. This is in case the SWF is loaded from a URL that doesn't include `www`.

Save the file. Upload `crossdomain.xml` to the root of the domain where Director resides. For example, `http://www.myotherdomain.com/crossdomain.xml`.

Reload your HTML/SWF in your web browser. Images should now be loading from Director.

ERRORS WHEN UPLOADING

If you receive an error when uploading, make sure the `ssp_director/.htaccess` file contains the following:

```
<IfModule mod_security.c>
  SecFilterScanPOST Off
</IfModule>
```

DOMNEY

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