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Advisor Answers

Putting files on the Desktop

VFP 6.0, 5.0, 3.0

Q: I am developing an application that may be run on Win98 or Win2K and I want to export to the desktop. Is there an easy way to determine the path of the Desktop directories, as there is for the temporary directory?

-Louis Zelus (via Advisor.COM)

A: FoxPro makes it very easy to determine where it's storing temporary files. Just grab the return value of the SYS(2023) function. It's worth noting that this is the directory where FoxPro is storing temp files. It may not be the same as the system temp file directory. You can set FoxPro's temporary file directory, either through the File Locations page of the Tools-Options dialog or by specifying the TmpFiles item in your configuration file, like this:

```
TmpFiles=C:\VFPTemp
```

However, by default, FoxPro's temporary files are stored to the directory specified as the system temp file directory.

It's not quite as easy to determine the Desktop directory, but it's not hard, either. The easiest way to do so is to use the Shell object of the Windows Scripting Host. It only takes two lines of code:

```
oShell = CreateObject("wscript.shell")  
cDesktopFolder = oShell.SpecialFolders("Desktop")
```

While you can store a file on the desktop, usually it makes sense to store the file where it logically belongs and create a shortcut on the desktop instead.

The CreateShortcut method of the Shell object is the key to putting a shortcut on the desktop. You create a shortcut object, then populate its properties, then save it. This example puts a shortcut to the VFP 6 FAQ file on the desktop. The FAQ file itself is not stored in the Desktop directory, only the shortcut is.

```
oShortCut = oShell.CreateShortcut( cDesktopFolder + "\VFP 6 FAQ.LNK")  
WITH oShortCut
```

```
.TargetPath = HOME(1) + "VFP6FAQ.Txt"    && point to FAQ file  
.WindowState = 1    && set to normal (not maximized or minimized)  
.Save()  
ENDWITH
```

The Shortcut object has a number of other properties besides the two used in the example. WorkingDirectory lets you specify the start-up directory for the shortcut. That's what you'd enter in the "Start in:" textbox if you were creating the shortcut interactively. Hotkey specifies a keyboard combination to execute the shortcut. There are several others, as well.

So, to send a file to the desktop, you need to create the file (consider using StrToFile() for a text file), then use code like that shown above to create a shortcut on the desktop.

The Windows Scripting Host lets you do a great deal more in the Windows environment than just create shortcuts. For more information on the WSH objects and their PEMS, see Gene Sally's articles in the May '99 and August '99 issues of FoxPro Advisor. As of this writing, you can find the WSH documentation online at www.msdn.microsoft.com/scripting/.

-Tamar