

White Paper

Creation of Online Help for Fabasoft Folio

Fabasoft Folio 2019

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1 Overview

Fabasoft products provide the possibility to include online help and context sensitive help in the Fabasoft web browser environment. This can be done by providing ZIP files and CHM files or property descriptions via software components.

ZIP is a widespread format for the compression of files. Thus, HTML files can be provided in a ZIP file. CHM is the abbreviation for "Compiled HTML Manual". The advantage of this help file format in comparison to pure HTML is the fact that it is a compressed format. Additionally, this format provides extended functionality in the form of navigational aids like trees.

2 Software Requirements

System environment: All information contained in this document implicitly assumes a Microsoft Windows environment or a Linux environment.

Supported platforms: For detailed information on supported operating systems and software see the software product information on the Fabasoft distribution media.

3 Prerequisites

A new software component must be created that will provide the help content for users. In this example the software component is named *XYHelp*. Additionally a CHM file and a ZIP file are required that contain the help content. The CHM file in this example is named `XYHelp.chm`. The ZIP file in this example is named `XYHelp.zip`.

4 Including Help

Following rules apply to the evaluation which help texts should be displayed.

Online help

- Online help files (CHM, ZIP files) are displayed for the software component referenced in the vApp configuration and all software components defined in the *More Help* hierarchy (see step 3).

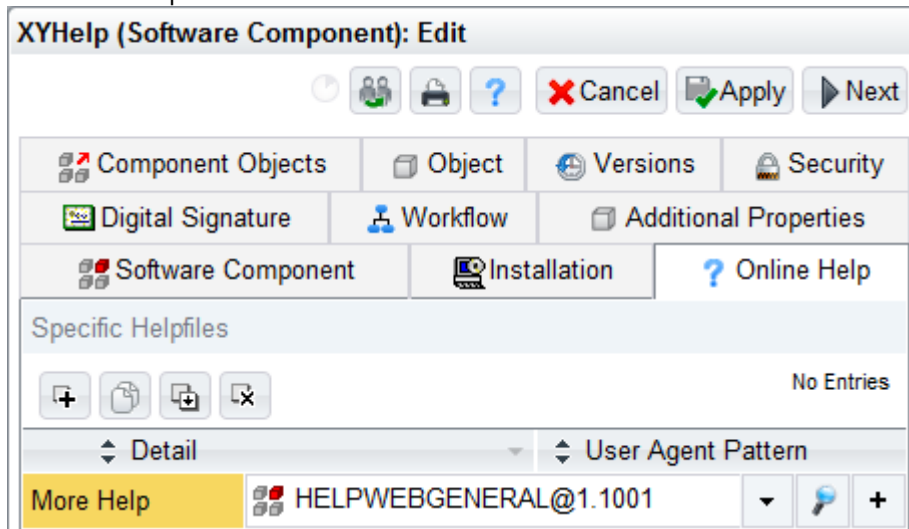
Context sensitive help

- Context sensitive help for a property is displayed, if the software component referenced in the vApp configuration provides an explanation text.
- If no explanation text is provided by the referenced software component, the *More Help* hierarchy is used to find an explanation text for the property.
- If no explanation text can be found in the *More Help* hierarchy, the explanation text belonging to the same software component as the property is displayed.
- Otherwise no explanation text is displayed for the property.

To define a software component in the vApp configuration, perform the following steps:

1. Navigate to the current domain ("Domain Administration" > "Object List" > "Domain Objects"). Edit the current domain object and click the "Components Configuration" tab. In the *Virtual Application Configuration* the used vApp configuration can be found. If the field is empty, select the `FSCVAPP@1.1001:DefaultConfig`.

- Edit the properties of the vApp configuration. On the "Settings" tab in the *Component for Help* field the software component for the online help must be specified. In this example use *XYHelp*, the software component created to provide help content.
Note: Use the software component `FSCVAPP@1.1001` as prerequisite and extended component in the *XYHelp* software component. Otherwise this setting will be lost in case of an update.
- (optional) It is possible to create a hierarchical structure of software components that provide help content. Edit the properties of the *XYHelp* software component. On the "Online Help" tab in the *More Help* field another software component for help can be used. This software component is considered as more general, that means that context sensitive content of that software component can be overwritten.

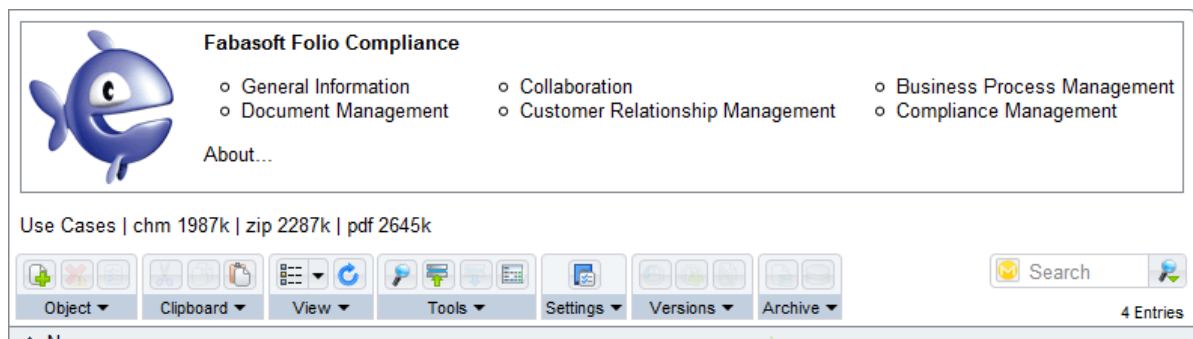


5 Online Help

Online help for users is realized by providing CHM files and ZIP files. How to display and provide them is outlined in the next few chapters.

5.1 Using Online Help

Links to online help themes can be displayed by clicking the button . This button can be found on every portal pane in the right upper corner.



The help area is divided into two parts. Inside the border links to HTML files (included in CHM files or included in ZIP files) can be provided. This area is used to point out important topics. Outside the border links to CHM and ZIP files are provided.

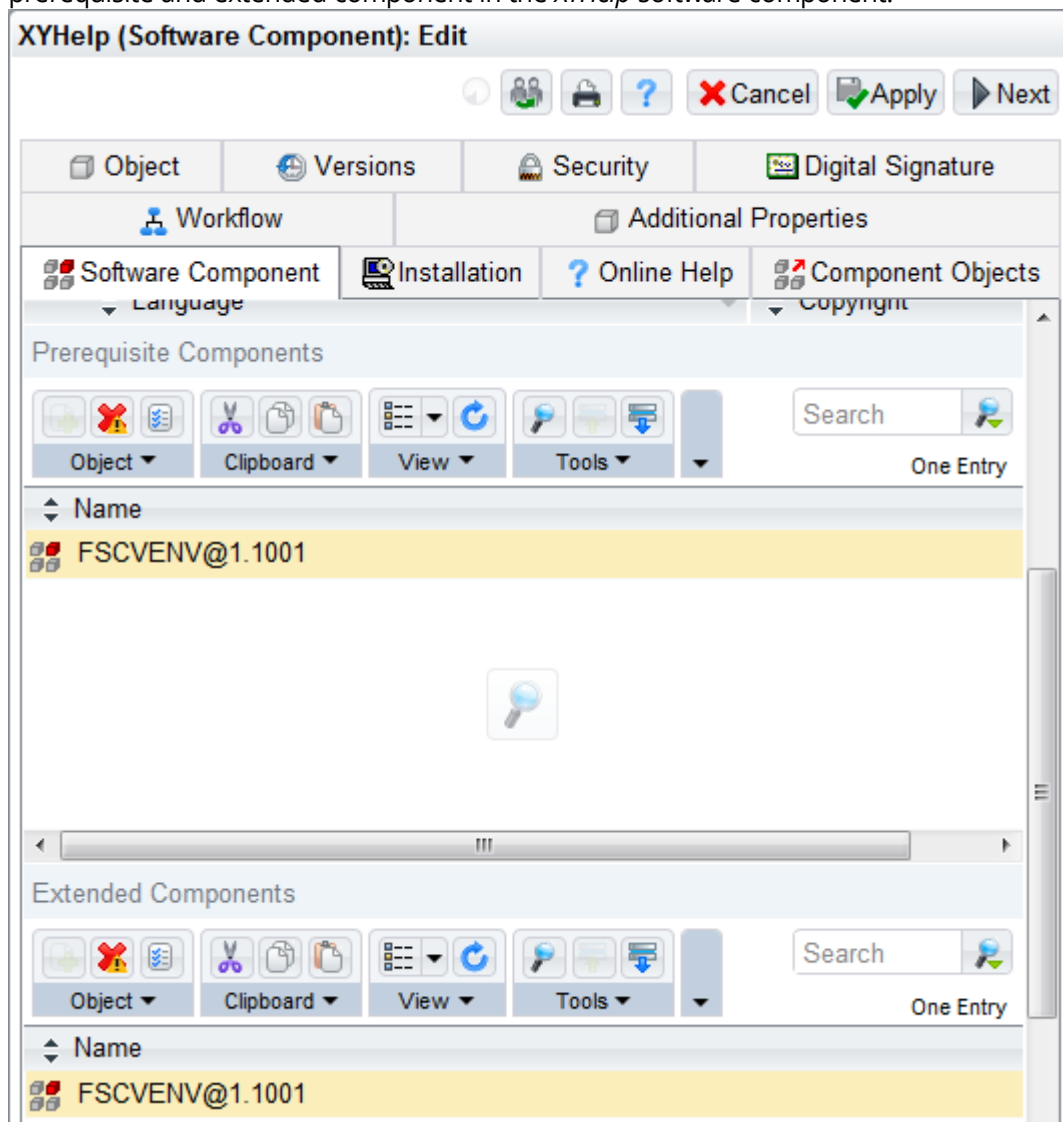
5.2 How to Create a Help Area

1. Each help area belongs to an application view. The first thing to do is to localize the appropriate application view where the help text should be displayed. For example if online help should be displayed on the "Classic" portal pane then the right choice is

FSCVENV@1.1001:ExploreAppView.







Note: Compare the name of the application view to the heading displayed on the page. The heading on the "Classic" portal pane is dynamic. It displays the object class and the name of the object. So the name of the application view must be something like this: `<%currobjclass%> "<%currobjname%>"`

Very important: Use the software component that the application view belongs to as prerequisite and extended component in the *XYHelp* software component.



2. Edit the properties of the appropriate application view and click the "Application View (Advanced)" tab.
3. In the *Explanation Texts* field a new line must be created. Select "Details" in the *Explanation Text Types* field and choose the *XYHelp* software component in the *Software Component* field.

<%currobjclass%> "<%currobjname%>" (Application View): Edit





Explanation Texts

Explanation Text Types *

+

Software Component

Explanation Text





No Entries

Language Language-Specific Content

URL (Expression)

The *Explanation Text* property represents the text and links in the help area. Creating a new entry in this field, it is possible to provide different help content for different languages. Help content is only displayed if the language of the user environment matches the language of the help content. The help content has to be created in the file system and imported in the language-specific content afterwards. It has to be encoded in UTF-8 and correspond to the following example:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<p style="border-width:1px;border-style:solid;bolder-color:black">
<table width="100%" border="0">
  <tr>
    <td width="110pt">
      
    </td>
    <td>
      <table border="0">
        <th align="left" colspan="3" style="font:medium">
          XY Help
        </th>
        <tr>
          <td align="left" valign="top" height="10">
            <ul>
              <li><a onclick="return
                vapphelp('XYHELP.chm:./TheDesk.htm')"
                href="#">The Desk</a>
              </li>
            </ul>
          </td>
          <td align="left" valign="top" height="10">
            <ul>
              <li><a onclick="return
                vapphelp('XYHELP.chm:./TheSearch.htm')"
                href="#">The Search</a>
              </li>
            </ul>
          </td>
        </tr>
      </table>
    </td>
  </tr>
</table>
```

</p>

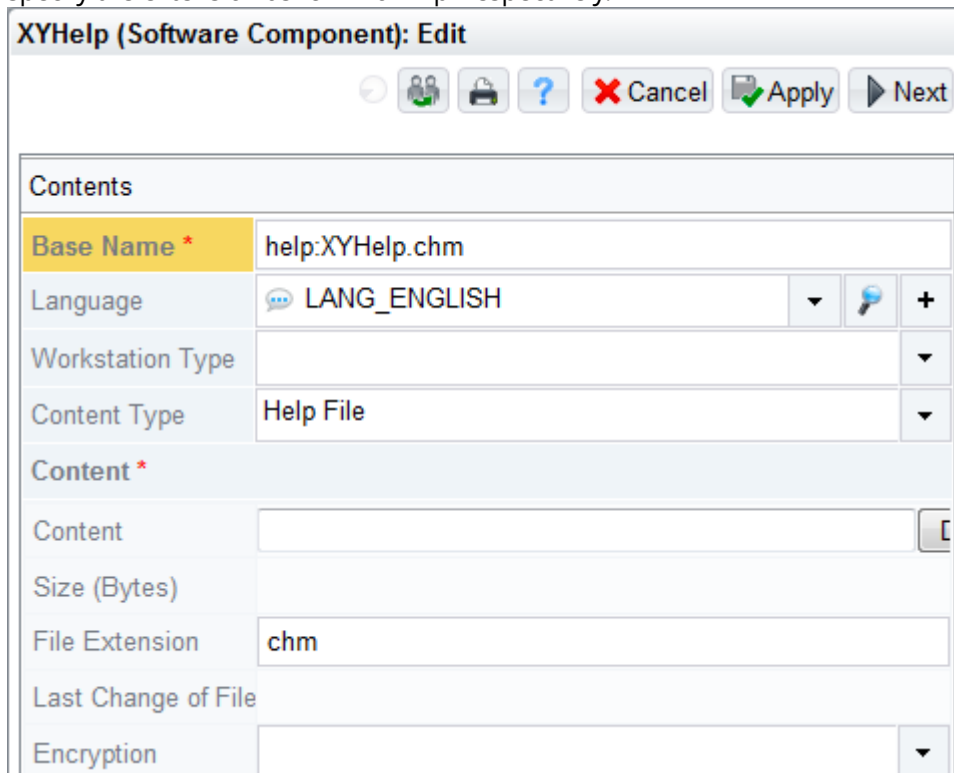
The HTML text between the outer <table> tags may be modified. The first <td> tag contains Fabi the fish. The <th> tag represents the heading. Below the heading are two columns with a link in each column.

Save the text file in UTF-8 and import it in the *Explanation Text* field. The result for this example looks like:



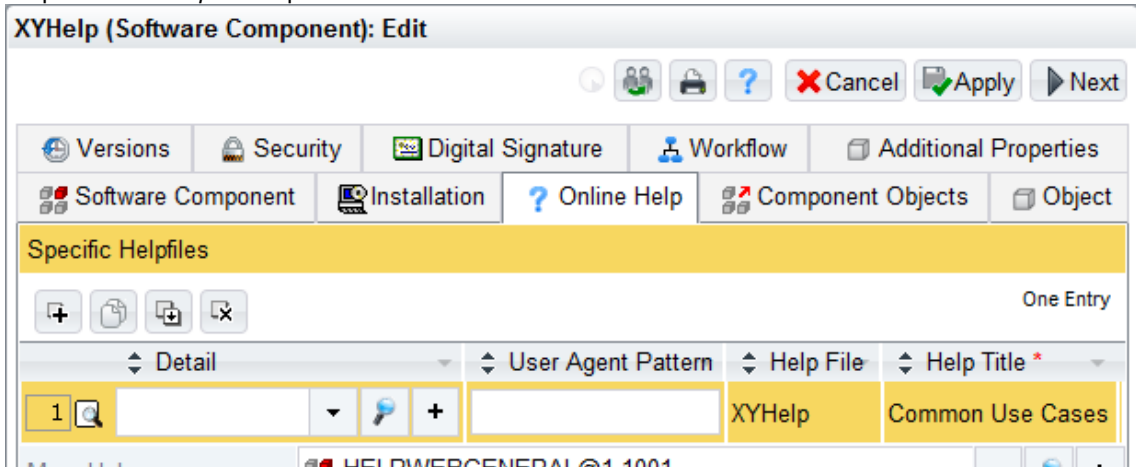
Note: Immediately after the change the result can only be seen if an `iisreset` is performed. Reason: Component objects like virtual applications are cached and an `iisreset` forces a renewal of the cache.

4. Until now the links do not work because the CHM file that is linked must be provided in the software component for the online help. Edit the properties of the *XYHelp* software component. On the "Software Component" tab in the *Contents* field the CHM file `XYHelp.chm` and the ZIP file `XYHelp.zip` must be provided. Therefore create two entries in the *Contents* field. The *Base Name* field has to start with the string "help:" followed by the name of the file. Select the correct language, choose "Help File" as *Content Type*, import the CHM file or the ZIP file as *Content* and specify the extension as "chm" or "zip" respectively.



5. The HTML files included in the CHM file can be referenced by their names, for example `TheDesk.htm`. A link to that page in the `XYHelp.chm` looks like:
`The Desk`
CHM files and ZIP files as whole files can also be linked in the help area. The following steps are necessary to do this.

- Edit the properties of the software component. The links to CHM files are specified on the "Online Help" tab in the *Specific Help Files* field. Create a new line. In *Detail* the object is specified where the link to the help file should be displayed (e.g. if you specify `FSCVENV@1.1001:ExploreAppView`, the link would only appear in this application view). If the field is empty the link appears in forms and portal pages. In *Help File* insert the name of the help file. The *Help Title* specifies the text of the link.




Note: There has to be a file named `index.htm` in the ZIP file, so that browsing the help contents is possible. Typically this is the root file of the help contents.
An `iisreset` is necessary to display the links in the Fabasoft Folio Web Client.

6 Context Sensitive Help

Context sensitive help is used to describe particular properties and to display the description next to properties. This possibility is used in the editor to provide help for several fields when editing the properties of an object.

6.1 Using Context Sensitive Help

In the editor there are two possibilities to display context sensitive help:

- All available descriptions of the current form can be displayed by clicking on the button .
- If the user is only interested in the description of a single property the focus must be set to that property and a pop-up window with the explanation text is displayed when the "F1" key is pressed.

6.2 How to Create Explanations

- First the property must be localized for which the explanation text should be written.
Note: Properties are part of object classes, contained in forms. To identify a particular property search for the object class, look for the correct form and get the reference of the property.
- Edit the properties of the property. Select the "Explanation Texts" tab. Create a new line and select "Details" in the *Explanation Text Type* field and select the *Software Component*. The explanation text must be of following format and saved in UTF-8:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<p>
<b></b>
</p>
```

<p>
</p>

3. The HTML text after the <xml> tag may be modified. Between the tags a heading can be specified and between the tags the explanation text can be written.
4. For the explanation the correct language must be selected, the text file has to be imported and the *Extension of File* "txt" has to be specified.

Note: Properties may be reused in different object classes. So the explanation text must be as precise as possible but with respect to the different usage situations. The same properties are used for search forms, edit forms and read-only forms. Take this fact into account when writing explanation texts. An `iisreset` is necessary to display the explanations in the Fabasoft Folio Web Client.

Very important: Do not forget to include the software component the property belongs to as prerequisite and extended component in the help software component. Instead of that it is also possible to use the *References of Optionally Extended Components* field. Enter the reference of the optionally extended software component as string (e.g. `COOWF@1.1`) but do not reference the software component in the properties *Prerequisite Components* or *Extended Components*. The advantage of optionally extended software components is the fact that the component objects extended with explanation texts do not have to exist in the domain where the software component for online help is installed.