Setup And Deployment

The process of creating setup and making it available on a CD or network resource is called as setup and deployment. To create setup for the project, follow the following steps.

1. Open the project for which you want to create setup in visual studio.net.

2. From the file menu choose "New Project" option to open new project dialog box. Within this dialog box, choose "setup project" under "setup and deployment" under "other project types", provide a name to the setup project, choose "Add to Solution" from solution option and click on ok button to add the setup project to same solution as the project for which you have to create setup.

3. "File System" of setup project is opened that is used to specify the list files to be copied to the client system during installation. It contains three folders by default, "Application Folder", "Users programs menu" and "Users desktop".

4. "Application Folder" is used to specify the files to be copied to the folder created for your project on client machine during installation. Exe file of the project and other required files to run the project must be in "Application Folder". To add these files to the application folder, right click on application folder and choose "add -> project output" that displays a dialog box. In this dialog box select every option and click on ok button.

5. Either the database files if you are using a desktop database or the report files in the project have to be copied to the same folder as the exe file. To add these files to the "application folder", right click on application folder and choose "Add -> File" option to display open file dialog box. In the open file dialog box select the database file or the report files and click on open button.

6. If your project refers to any private assemblies then the DLL files of those private assemblies must be in the same folder as exe file. To add DLL files of private assemblies referred by the application to the application folder, right click on application folder and choose "Add -> Assembly" option to open, select component dialog box. In this dialog box, select "browse" tab, select DLL file of private assembly and click on ok button.

7. "Users Programs Menu" folder is used to specify the short cuts you want to create in the programs menu in start menu on client system during installation. To create a folder for your project in the programs menu to place all the short cuts of your project, right click in users programs menu folder and choose "Add -> Folder", provide a name to the folder and press enter key.

8. One short cut we must create in this folder is the short cut to exe file of the project. To create a short cut for exe file of the project, right click in the right hand side window after selecting the folder you created in users programs menu and choose "Create New Short Cut" that displays a dialog box. In this dialog box open application folder, select "primary output" and click on ok button.

9. "Users Desktop" folder is used to specify the short cuts to be created on desktop in client machine during installation. To create a short cut for exe file of the project, open users desktop folder, right click in the right side window and choose "Create New Shortcut" that displays a dialog box. In this dialog box open application folder, select "primary output" and click on ok button.

10. Special folders like "Fonts", "Program Files", "System", "Windows" and "Global Assembly Cache" can be added to the file system. To add a special folder to the file system, right click on "File System On Target Machine" and choose the corresponding folder from "Add Special Folder" menu.

11. "Fonts" folder is used to add to add any font files related to special fonts used in the project so that they are automatically placed in fonts folder in client machine during installation. To add font files to this folder, right click on the folder and choose "Add -> File" option to display open file dialog box. In this dialog box select the font files and click on open button.

12. "Windows", "System" and "Program Files" folders are used to specify the files to be placed in the corresponding folder on client system during installation. To add files to these folders right click on the folder and choose "Add - > File" option.

13. "Global Assembly Cache" folder is used to specify the DLL files of shared assemblies referred by the project so that they are automatically placed in GAC on client machine during installation. To add DLL files of shared assemblies referred by the application to this folder, right click on the folder and choose "Add -> Assembly" option to open, select component

dialog box. In this dialog box, select "browse" tab, select DLL file of shared assembly and click on ok button.

14. Setup project provides other options like "Registry", "File Types", "User Interface", "Custom Actions" and "Launch Conditions". To open any of these options, right click on setup project in solution explorer and choose View followed by the option you want to open.

15. "Registry" option is used to specify the entries you want to write to the windows registry during installation.

16. "File Types" is used to specify any new file types introduced by your application to be identified by windows to open those files in your application when user double clicks on it and to specify the icon to display for the files of that particular type.

17. "User Interface" is used to specify various screens to display during installation.

18. "Custom Actions" is used to specify your own code to be executed at the end of installation and it may be in the form a DLL or EXE.

19. "Launch Conditions" is used to specify minimum system requirements for installing your application.

20. After completing setup, right click on solution in solution explorer and choose "configuration manager" to open configuration manager. In the configuration manager window choose "Release" for both the projects under "configuration", check the check box "Build" for both the projects and close the configuration manager.

21. Build the solution using the shortcut "ctrl + shift + b" to build the solution, which creates setup within the same folder as your project.