Convert the Layout Template or Container from HTML to ASCX

Overview

Although you can define your layout templates or containers in either HTML or ASCX, DNN uses ASCX internally. Therefore, if you create your layout templates or containers in HTML, you must convert them to ASCX before you package your theme.
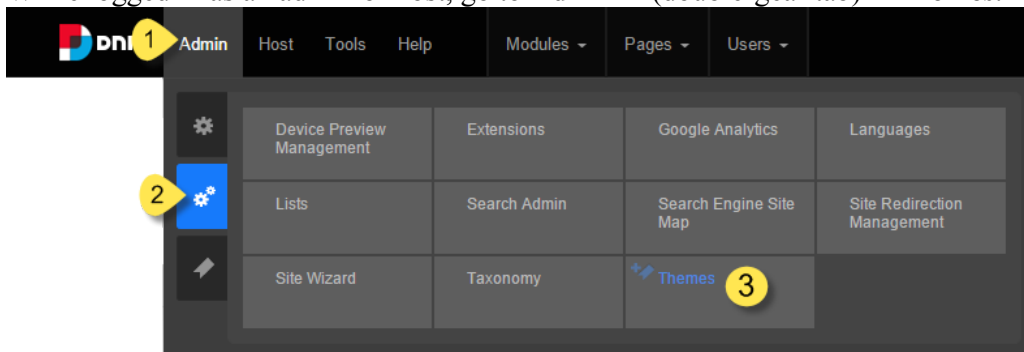
The conversion:

- adds the **Control** code at the top of the file,
- adds **Registry** code for each token used within the file, and
- replaces the HTML tokens with ASCX tokens.

Prerequisites

- **A host / super user account.** Host privileges are required to upload modules and themes (themes can include executables). A host account is also required to convert an HTML theme to ASCX. (An administrator account is sufficient to apply modules and themes to a website.)

Steps

1. While logged in as an admin or host, go to **Admin** > (double-gear tab) > **Themes**.

2. Choose your new theme in the **Themes** dropdown, then click **Parse Theme Package**.

3. Confirm:
   - That a section appears under **Themes** for each converted HTML file.
   - That no errors appear in the log.
   - That the new ASCX file appears in the same folder as the HTML file.

NOTE: The conversion only goes in one direction (from HTML to ASCX). To make changes to the layout template:

- Make changes directly to the ASPX file.
- Make the changes in your original HTML file and reconvert it to ASPX. **Warning:** This overrides prior changes made directly to the ASPX file.

Example 1

This simple HTML layout template or container:

```
<div id="ContentPane" runat="server"></div>
```

is converted to this ASCX layout template:

```
<%@ Control language="vb" AutoEventWireup="false" Explicit="True" Inherits="DotNetNuke.UI.Skins.Skin">
<div id="ContentPane" runat="server"></div>
```

Example 2

This HTML layout template or container, which includes the [COPYRIGHT] token:

```
<div id="ContentPane" runat="server">
    [COPYRIGHT]
</div>
```

is converted to this ASCX layout template:

```
<%@ Control language="vb" AutoEventWireup="false" Explicit="True" Inherits="DotNetNuke.UI.Skins.Skin" %>
<%@ Register TagPrefix="dnn" TagName="COPYRIGHT" Src="~/Admin/Skins/Copyright.ascx" %>
<div id="ContentPane" runat="server">
    <dnn:COPYRIGHT runat="server" id="dnnCOPYRIGHT" />
</div>
```

See Also

- DNN Wiki: DotNetNuke Skins
- Create Layout Template
- Create a Container

Sources

- DNN Community blog: DotNetNuke Skinning 101 (Part 1) by Joe Brinkman