

Flex in a Week, Flex 4.5

Video 5.09: Implementing skin parts

In this video, you will learn about skin parts and how to use them to drastically change your Spark component's look-and-feel.

In the last few videos, you learned how skin this Employee Portal application with the blue header background and pass a custom variable to set the color of the block in the Panel skin's header area.

In this video I will show you how to move the Panel container's header so that it will sit vertically to the right of the content and have vertical text.

To do this, you will learn how to adjust the properties of the built-in skin parts.

This is the Language Reference for the Spark Application container.

I'm clicking on the link for Skin Parts so that you can see that the Application container has two skin parts.

The controlBarGroup is an optional element that you can add to any Application container.

You have already used the contentGroup skin part in your exercises.

Remember that the contentGroup id is required and represents all of the content that is placed into the application.

These are the three skin parts for the Spark Panel container.

The titleDisplay is the only one that's different than the Application container.

This skin part references the title text in the title bar for the panel.

It is the titleDisplay skin part that I will modify to create the vertical Panel header.

Before I modify the title text itself, I need to move the colored Panel background for the title header to the right and make it vertical.

In Flash Builder, I am opening the skins folder and then opening the PanelContainerSkin.

In the code, I am locating the skins:PanelSkin tag, which references the FXG file in the skins package that draws the panel header's dark gray background.

I am adding the rotation property with a value of 90.

I am also adding the top, bottom and right properties all with a value of 0.

From the contentGroup container, I am removing the top property.

I'm saving the file and running the application.

The Panel container title skins are now located on the right of each Panel container, but they're overlapped by the Panel container content, which has shifted up.

Back in the main application file, I am adding the width property to the EmployeeOfTheMonth component instance and setting its value to 227.

I'm doing the same for the Cafeteria and MonthlyEvents components.

I am saving the file and running the application.

The content is contained within each panel, except for the Calorie Information in the Cafeteria panel and the employee title in the Employee of the Month panel.

I am returning to Flash Builder and opening the Cafeteria file by CTRL + clicking on its name.

To the RichText tag, I am reassigning the value of the width property to 100%.

I am saving the file and opening the EmployeeOfTheMonth.mxml file.

To the Label control with the employee's title, I am changing the value of the width property to 100 and the value of the height property to 50.

I'm saving the file and running the application.

The content in the Cafeteria panel does not overlap the panel skin and the employee's title in the Employee of the Month panel has better spacing.

However, the panel title is still floating at the top of each panel.

I'm returning the PanelContainerSkin.mxml file

To the titleDisplay Label control, I'm adding the rotation property with a value of 90.

From the Label control, I am removing the verticalAlign and left properties and updating the right property to have a value of 8 and the top property to have value of 35.

When I save the file and run the application, you can see the text is now displayed vertically and along the right side of the Panel containers.

Notice that the colored boxes are not positioned above the panel titles.

I'm returning to the PanelContainerSkin file.

To the second Rect block, I am adding the right property with a value of 0.

I'm saving the file and running the application.

The color blocks are now positioned properly above the panel titles.

For your next step, work through the exercise titled “Creating a vertical title bar on a Panel container”.