

Handle Large Number of Web Elements

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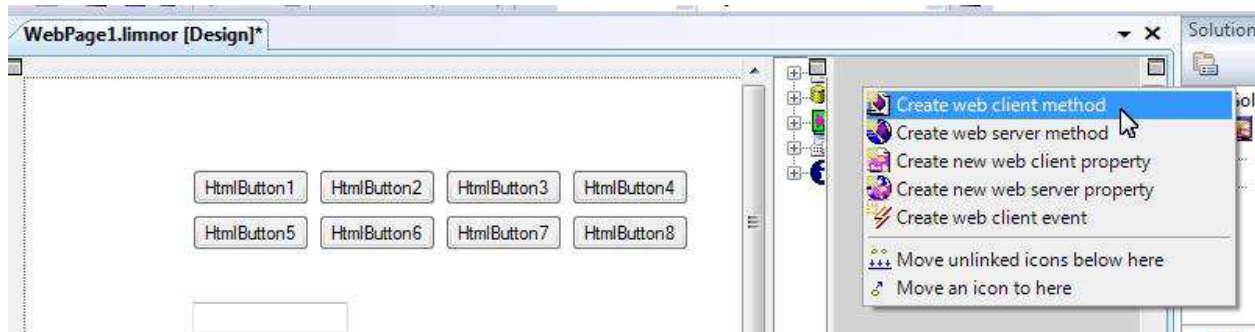
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Operate on Many Elements

Suppose we have many buttons on a web page. Suppose we want to set the background color of all the buttons to green. If we create one action to do it for each button then we have to create many actions. It will be tedious and likely to make mistakes. A better approach is to just use one action to act on all the buttons.

Every web element has a “getElementsByTagName” method which returns an array of child elements. We may use a “loop” action to perform a set of actions to all the array items. For how to handle arrays and collections, see <http://www.limnor.com/support/UseArrayAndCollections.pdf>

We may use the technique presented in <http://www.limnor.com/support/UseArrayAndCollections.pdf> to set all buttons’ background color to green. We’ll create a method to do it:

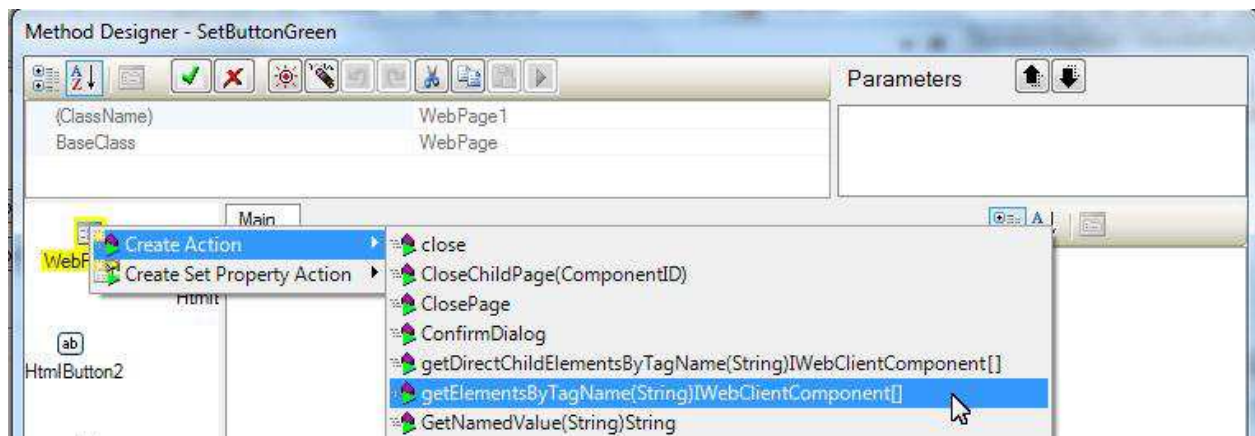


The Method Editor appears. We change its name to “SetButtonsGreen”:

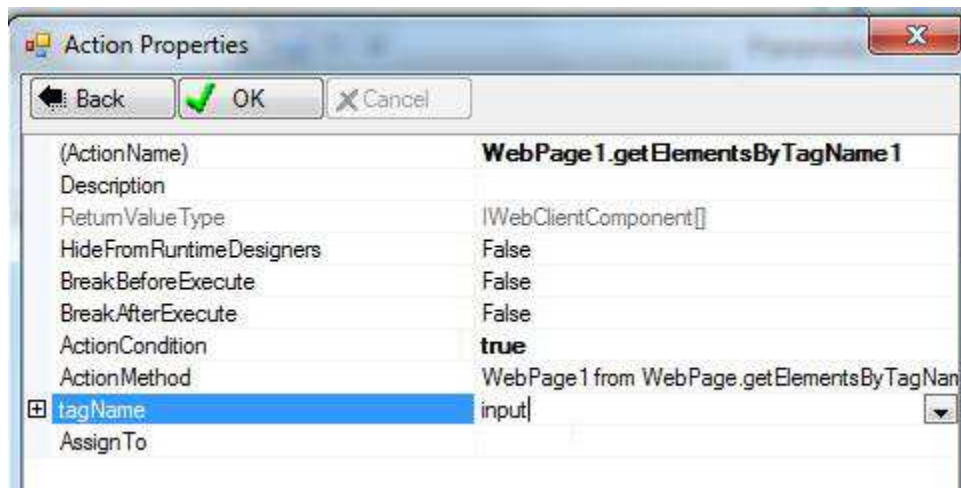


Collect elements into an array

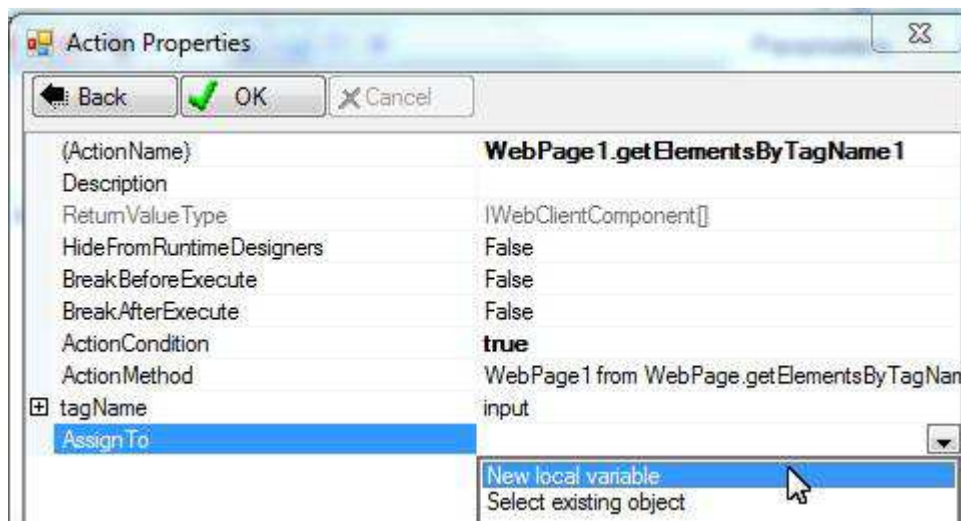
Create a “getElementsByTagName” action on the web page because all elements are child elements of the web page:



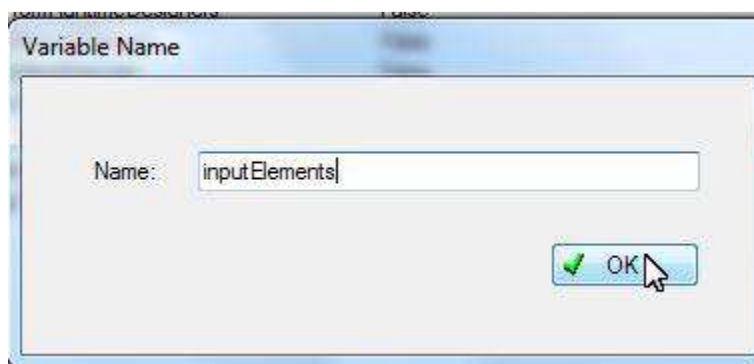
In this sample, the tag name for buttons is “input”. So set “tagName” to “input”:



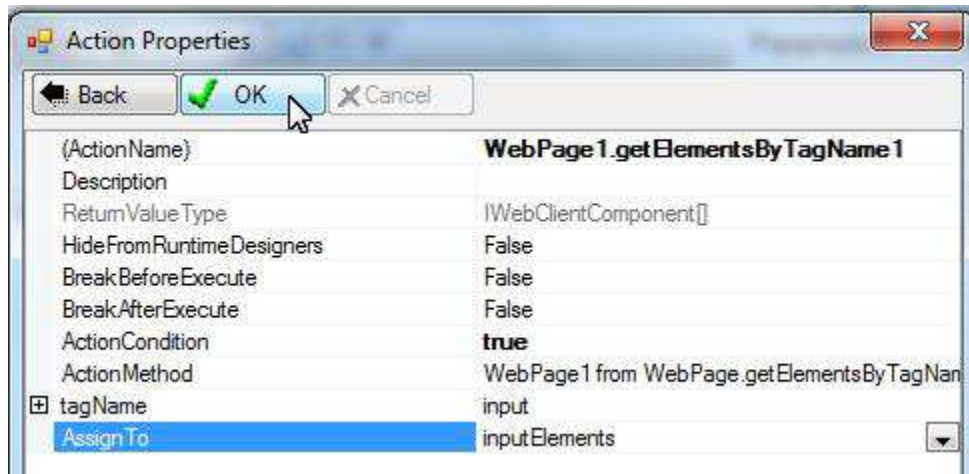
Select "New local variable" to create a new array to get the action result:



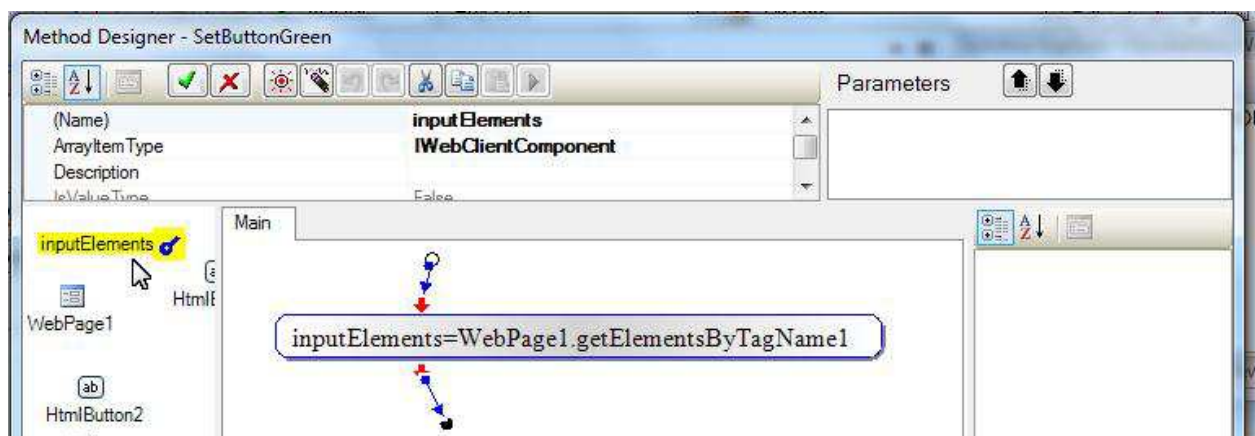
Give the variable a name:



Click OK.



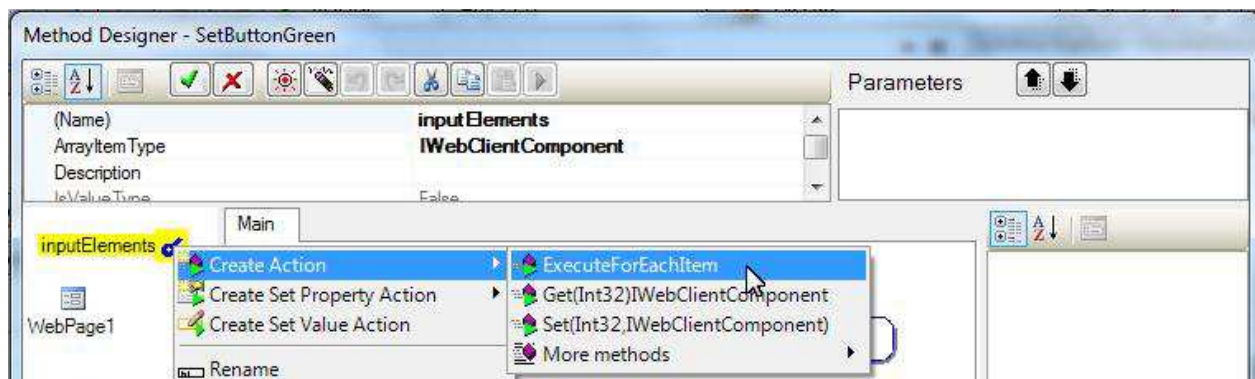
The action appears in the Action Pane. The variable, inputElements, appears in the Variable Pane.



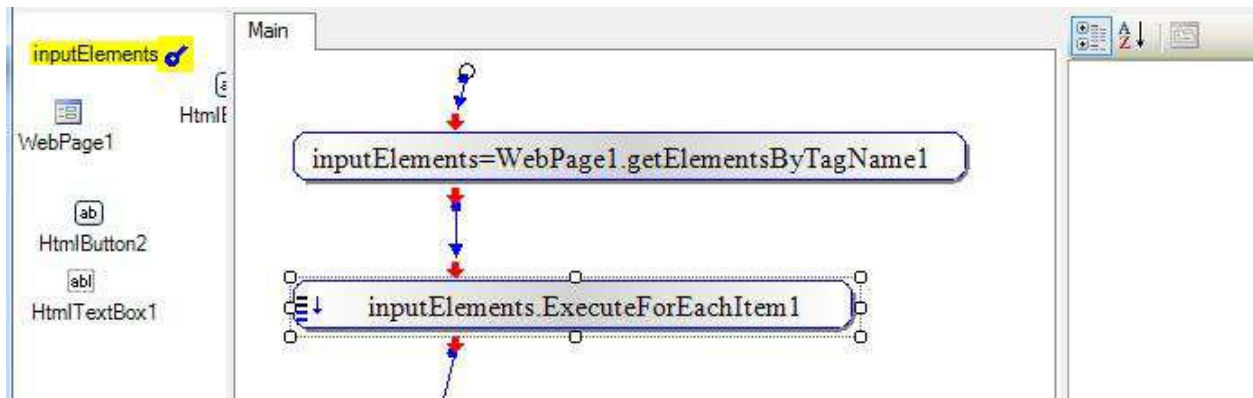
Go through array elements

See <http://www.limnor.com/support/UseArrayAndCollections.pdf> for different techniques of going through array elements. Here we create a “for each” action to do it.

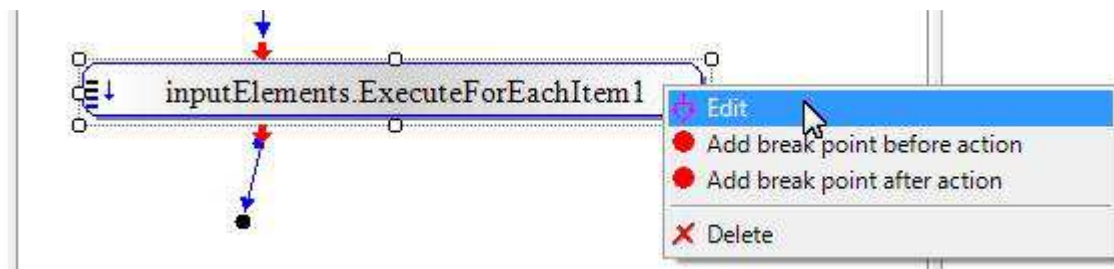
Right-click inputElements; choose



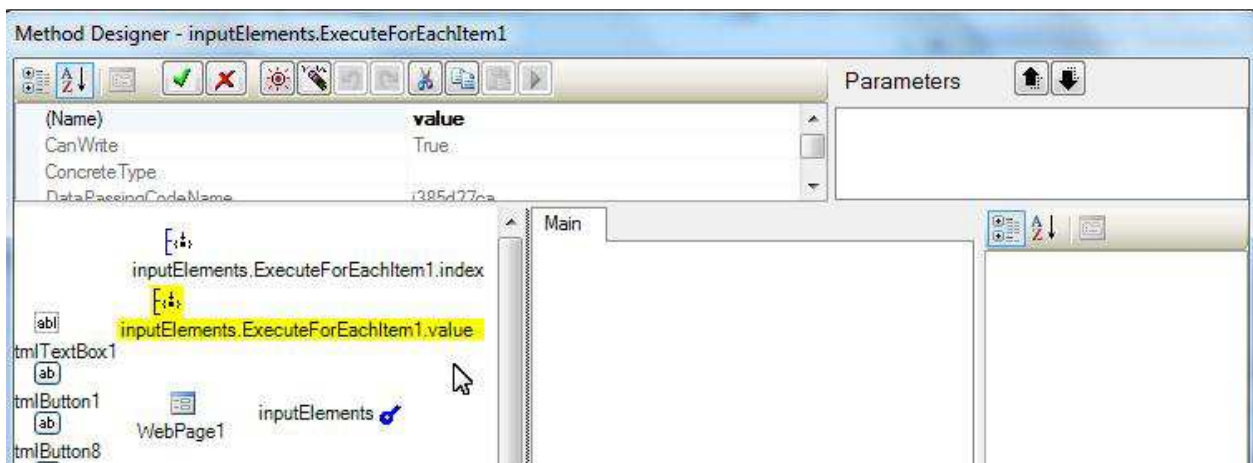
Link the “for each” action to the last action:



To apply actions to each array item, right-click the “for each” action; choose “Edit”:



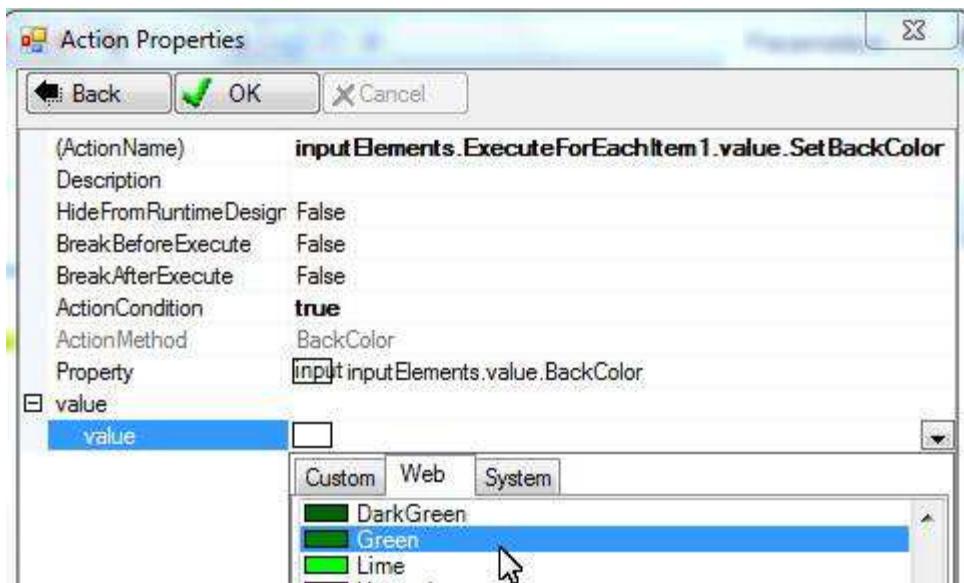
A new Method Editor appears. Note that a variable, `inputElements.ExecuteForEachItem1.value`, represents the array item to be processed:



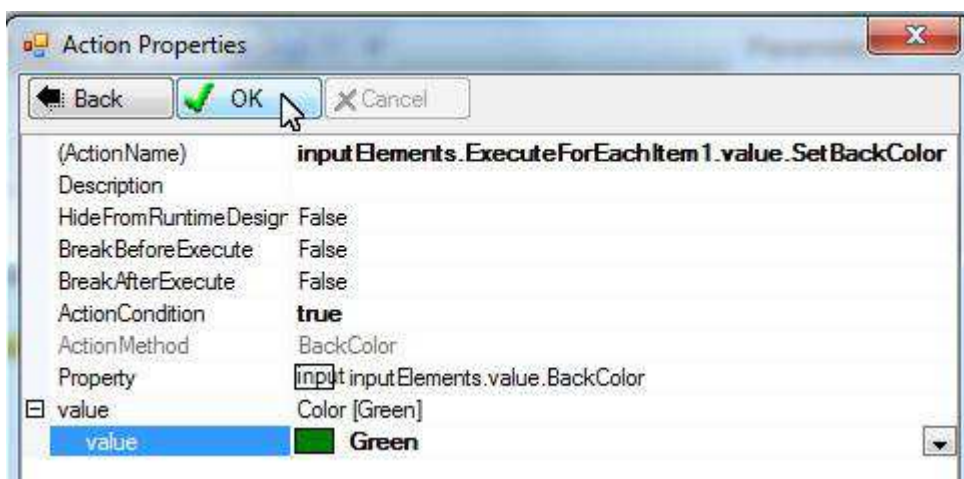
We want to the background color of the array item to green. Right-click the variable; choose “Create Set Property Action”; choose “BackColor” property:



Set the “value” of the action to green:

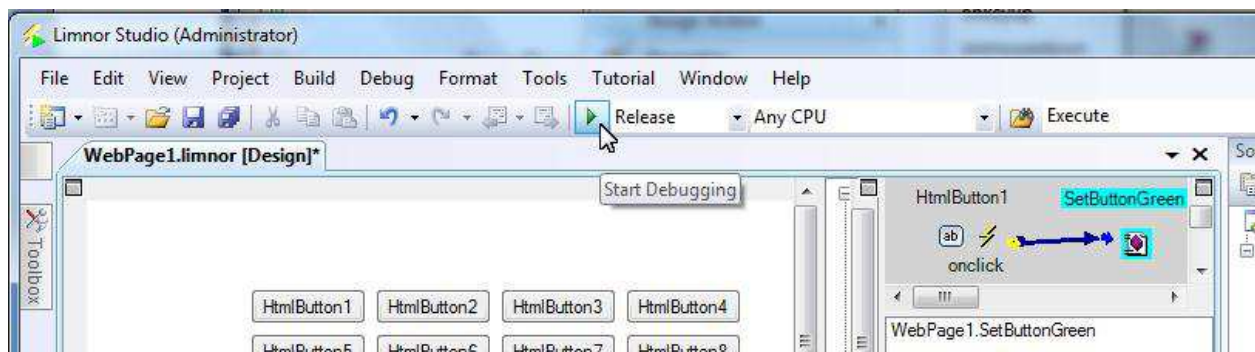


Click OK. The action appears in the Action Pane:

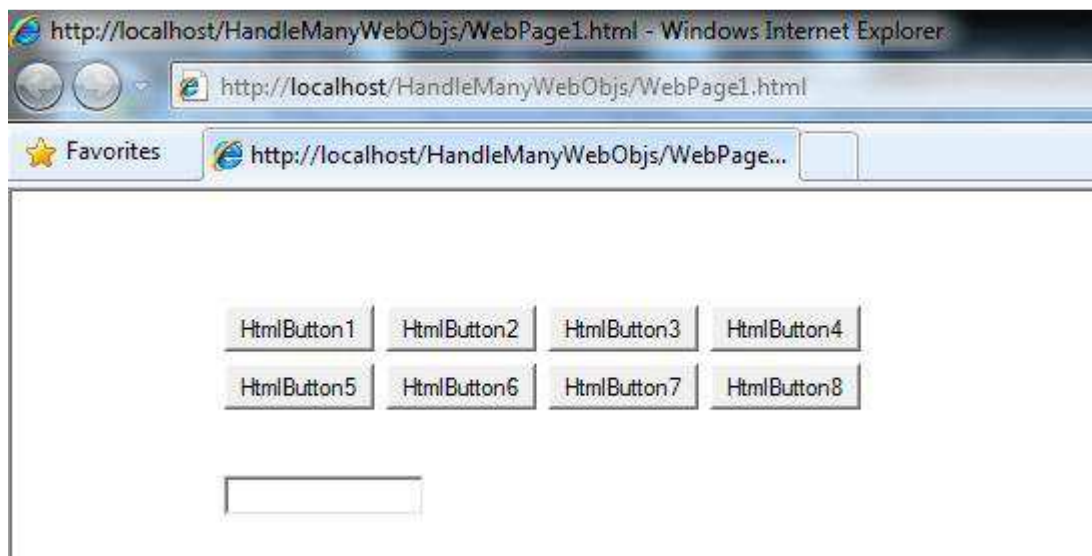




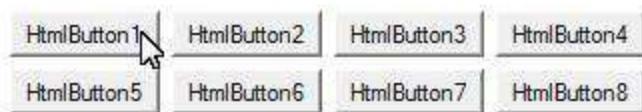
Click OK. An action is created and assigned to the button. Click Run button to test the web page:



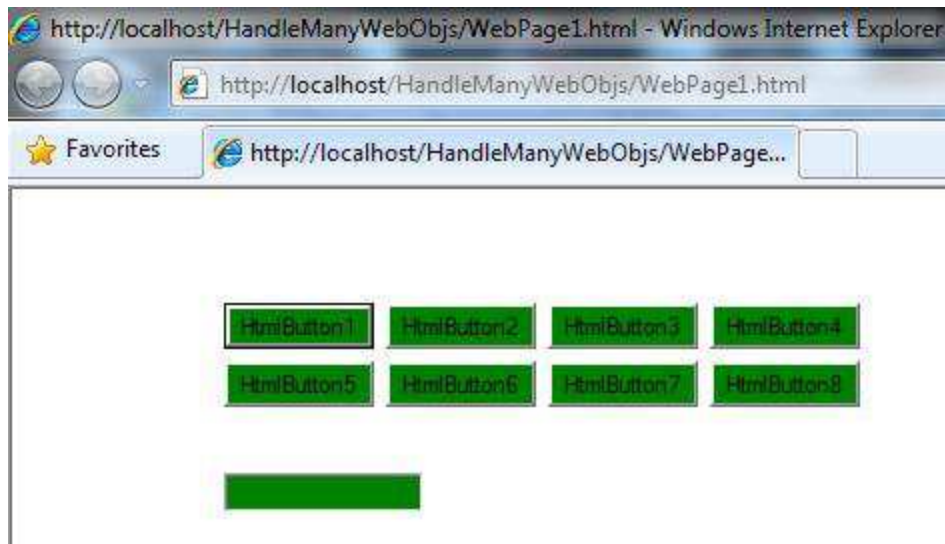
The page appears:



Click the first button to execute the method we just created:



All buttons' background color changed to green as we expected:

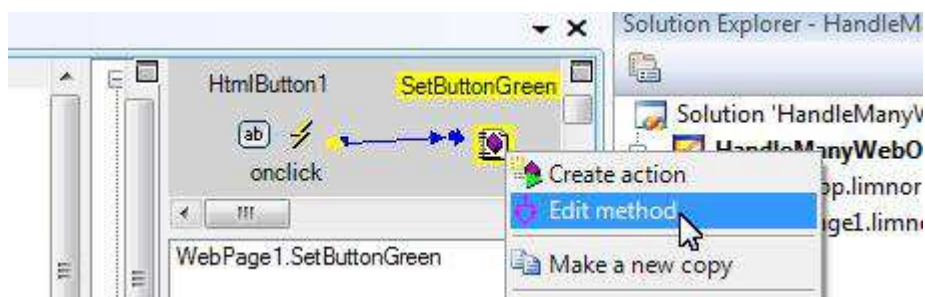


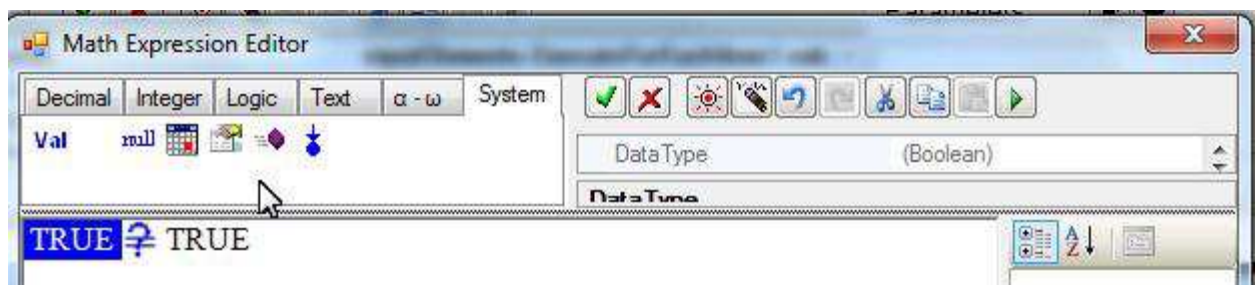
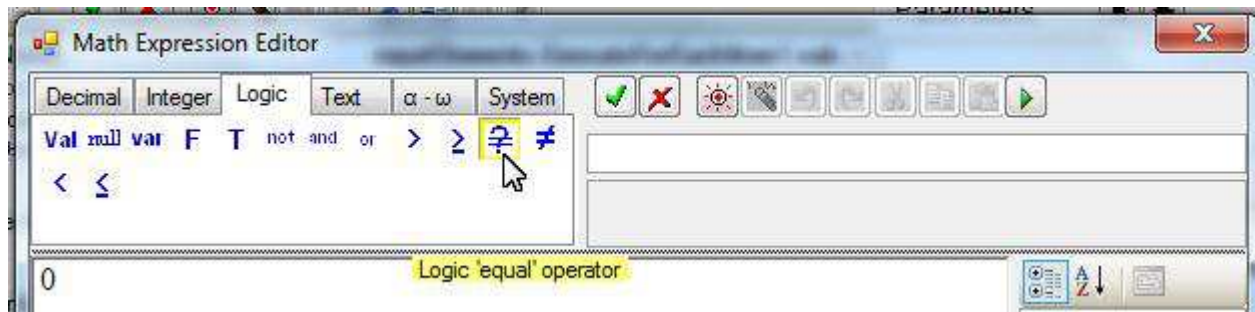
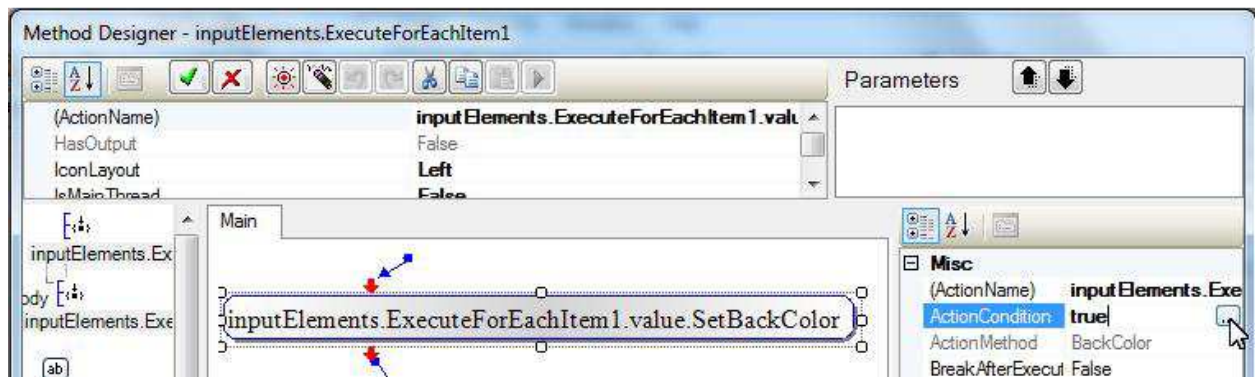
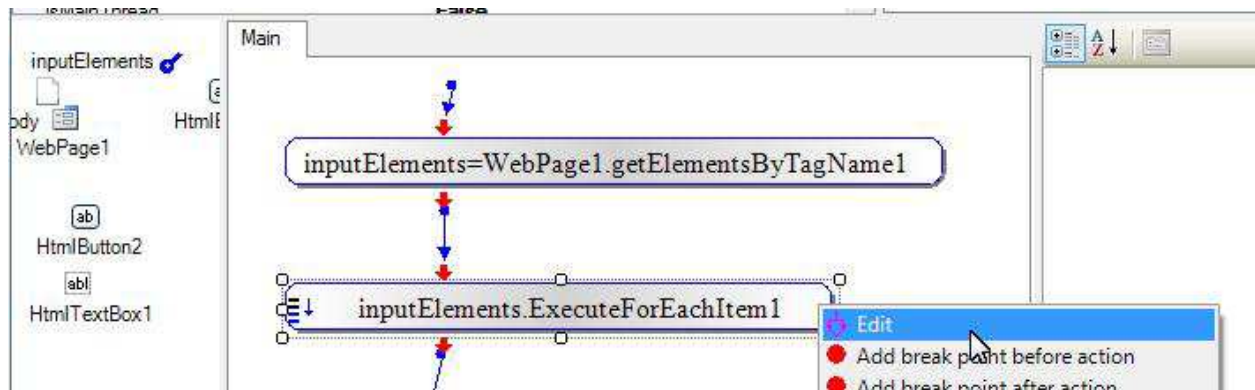
A bug and its solution

Note that clicking the first button not only changes background color of all the buttons, it also changes the background color of a text box. This is a bug of our method.

The bug occurs because the tag name for text boxes is also “input”. So, our action of “getElementsByTagName” not only returns buttons, it also returns text boxes. To distinguish buttons from text boxes, we need to use “type” property. See http://www.w3schools.com/tags/tag_input.asp for “type” definitions. For a button, its “type” property is “button”.

Let's add a condition to the action of setting background color so that it only execute if “type” is “button”.

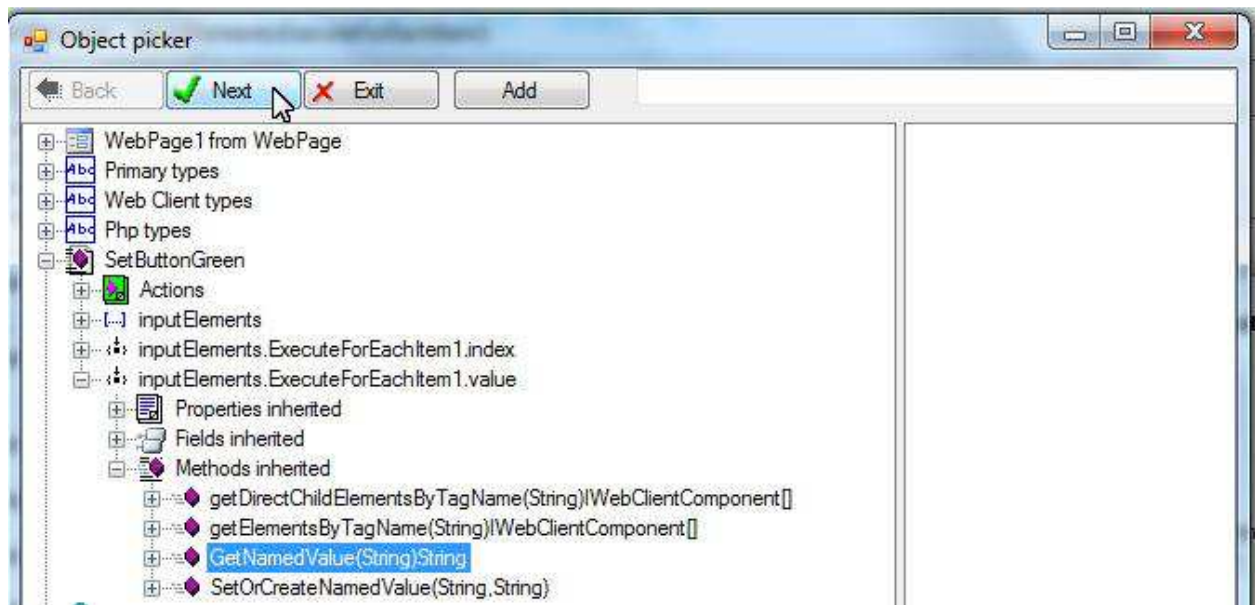
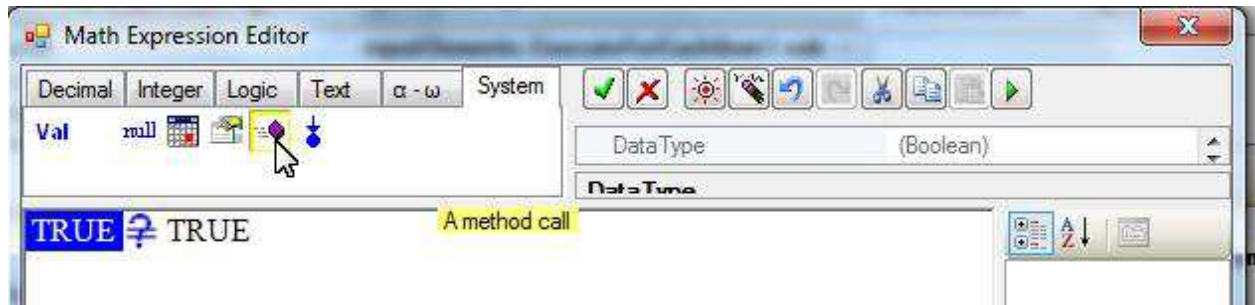




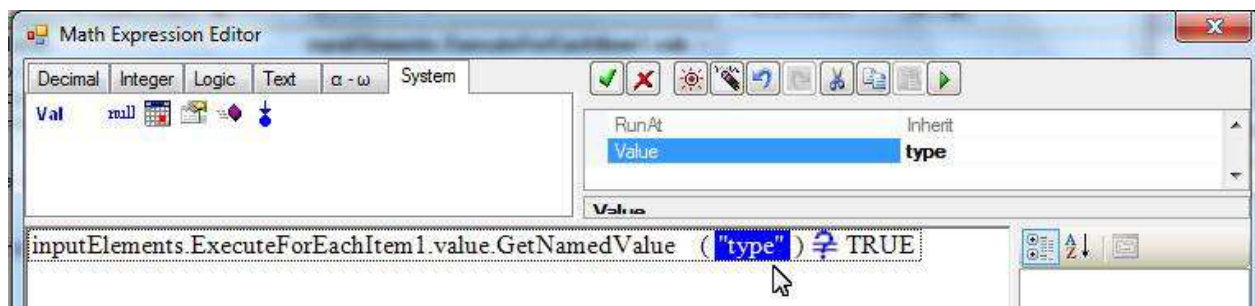
If we click the Property to get the “type” property of the array item then we will discover that the array item does not show a “type” property. This is because the array item represents a generic HTML element. Some kinds of HTML element do not have a “type” property.

All HTML elements have a “**GetNamedValue**” method. We may use it to get any property of any elements.

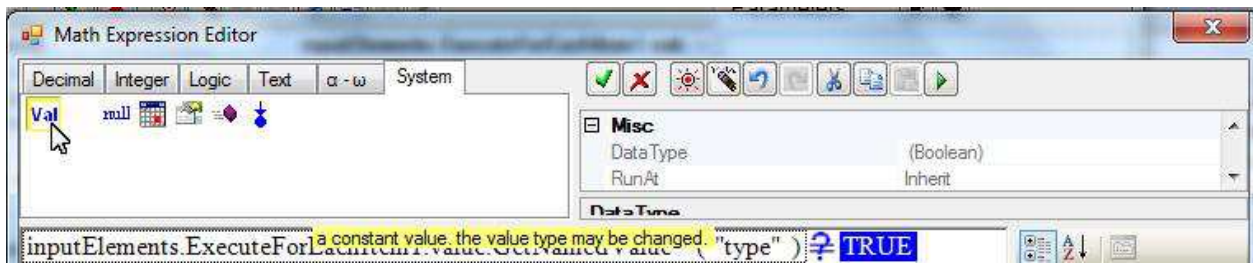
Click the Method icon and select GetNamedValue method of the array item:



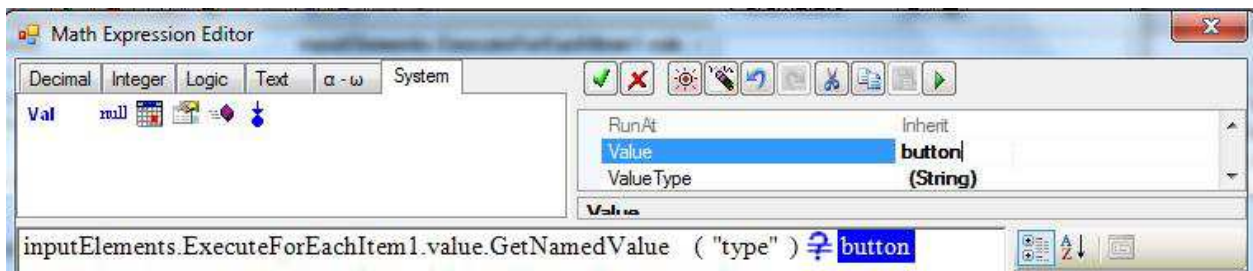
Type "type" for the method parameter:



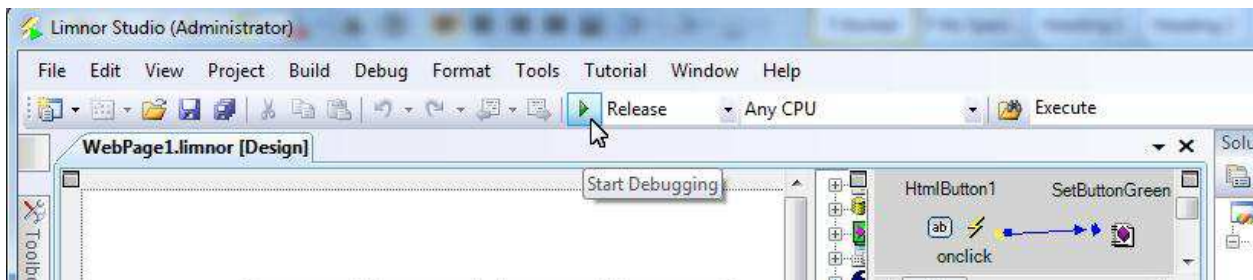
Select the value icon, "Val", for the second expression item:



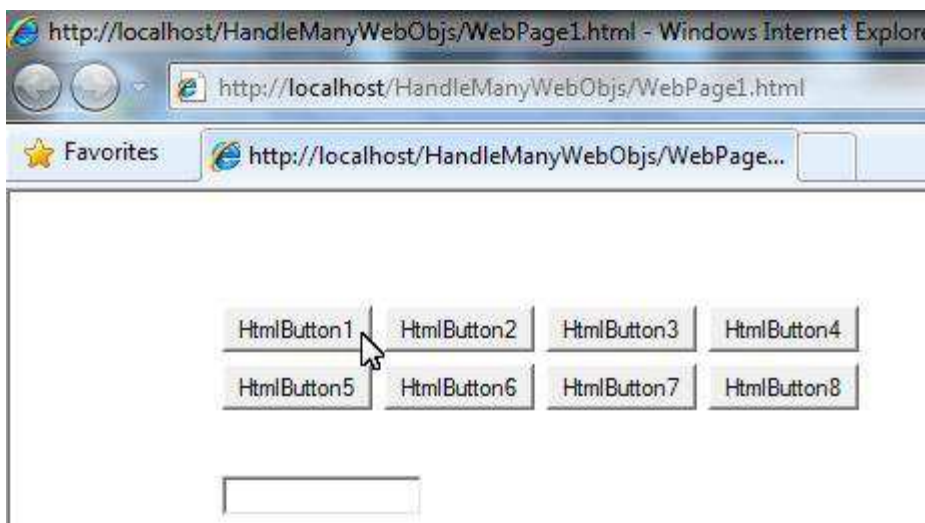
Type "button" for the value:



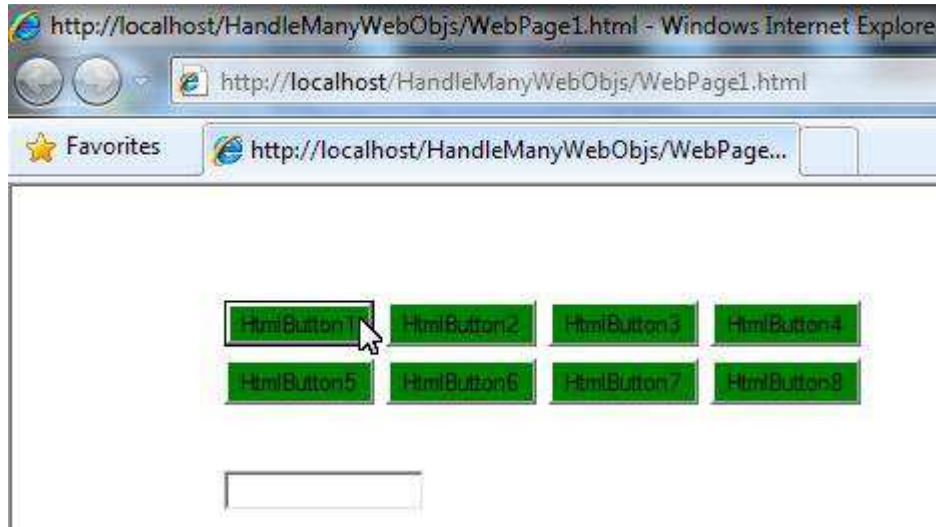
Finish the editing and test it again:



The web page appears. Click the first button:



This time, all buttons' background color changes to green. The background of the text box is not changed. We fixed the bug.



Notes

From the above sample, we can see that using a “loop” action, one set of actions can be applied to many objects. Actually we may freely add as many buttons as we want and the method we created above will work without any changes.

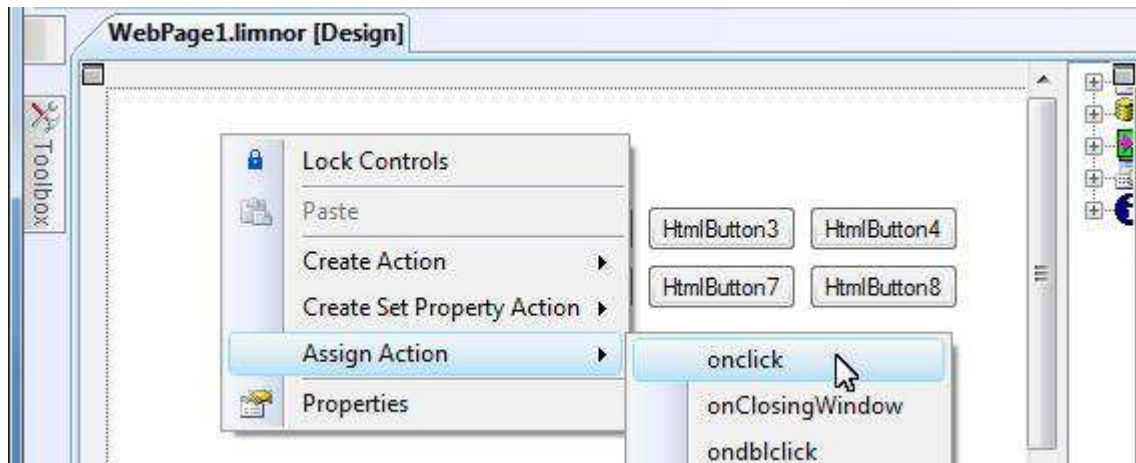
Handle events generated from many objects

Suppose we want to do such a programming: click a button, if the button's background color is green then change the button's background color to yellow; otherwise set the button's background color to green.

If we handle each button individually then we need to handle many events and create many actions. If we have many buttons to handle then the programming work is tedious and very likely to generate bugs.

Instead of handling each button, we may handle the element which is the parent of all the elements we want to handle. Keyboard and mouse events generated from one element can be handled in all levels of parents. See <http://www.limnor.com/support/WebEventBubbling.pdf> for details of using event bubbling.

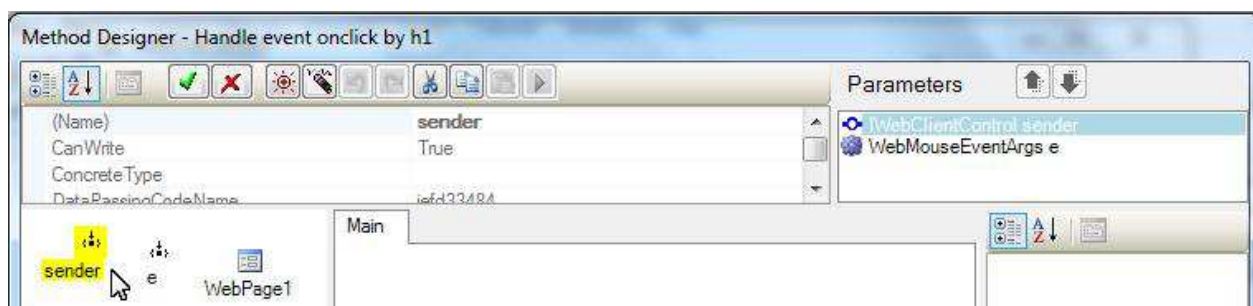
In this sample, the web page is the parent for all the buttons (actually a web page is a parent for all elements on the page). Instead of handling the click event of each button, we handle the click event of the page. The “sender” parameter is the element generating the event. Since we need to access the “sender” parameter, we need to create an event handling method. Right-click the web page; choose “Assign Action”; choose “onclick” event:



Select “New client event handler actions for onclick”:

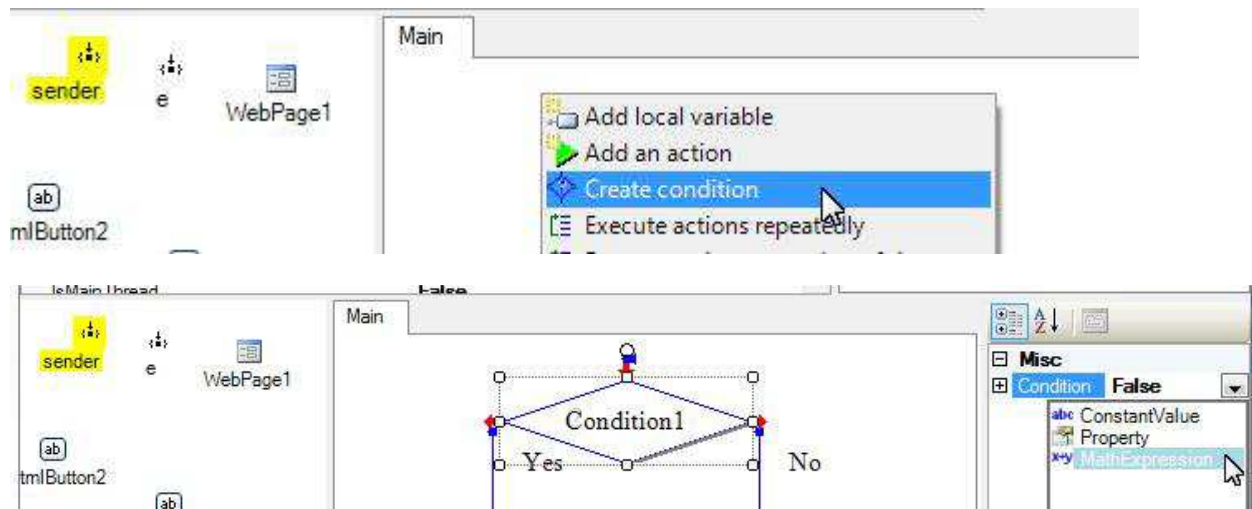


A Method Editor appears. Note that the “sender” parameter is the element generating the event.

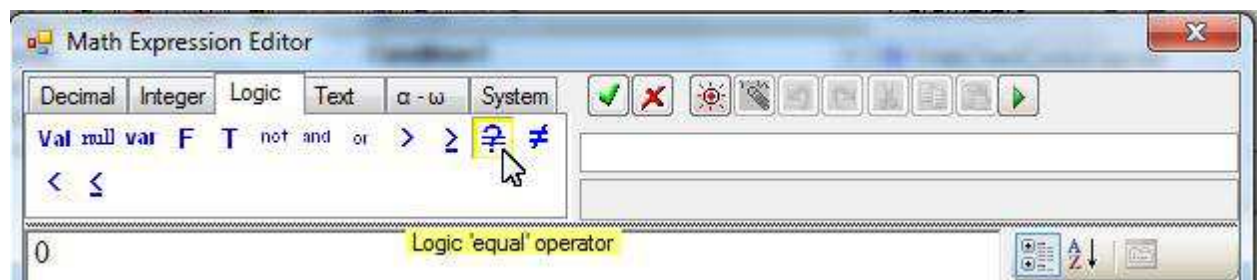


Condition for button

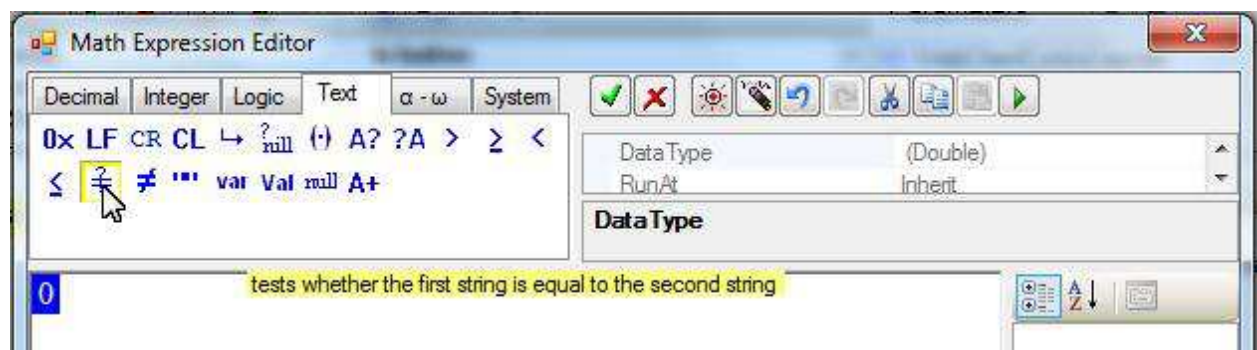
This event handler method will be executed when the page visitor clicks on any element on the page. We only want to handle button event. We already know that if the tagName is “input” and type is “button” then the sender is a button. Add a Condition action to check these conditions:



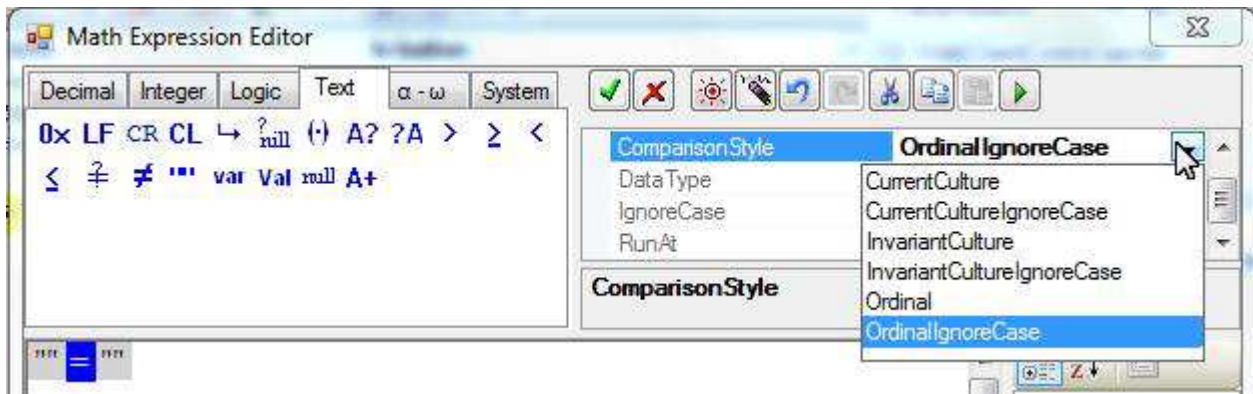
We want to check whether the tagName of the sender is "input". Note that using `==` from Logic tab is **wrong**:



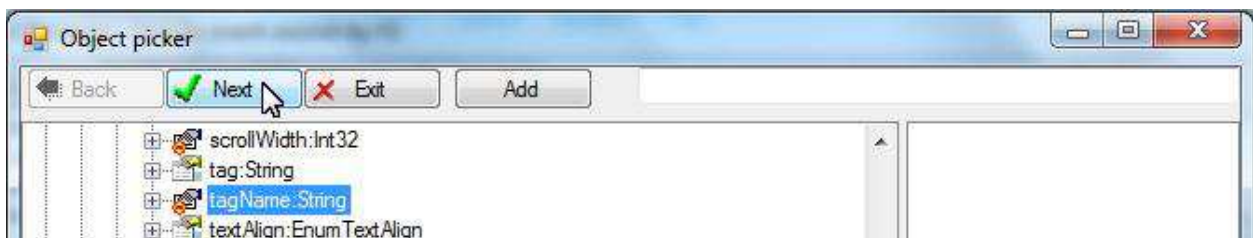
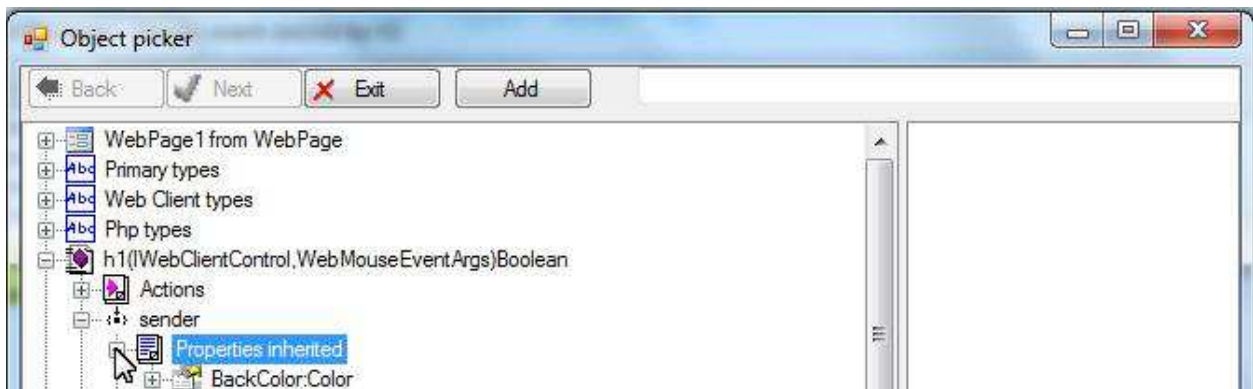
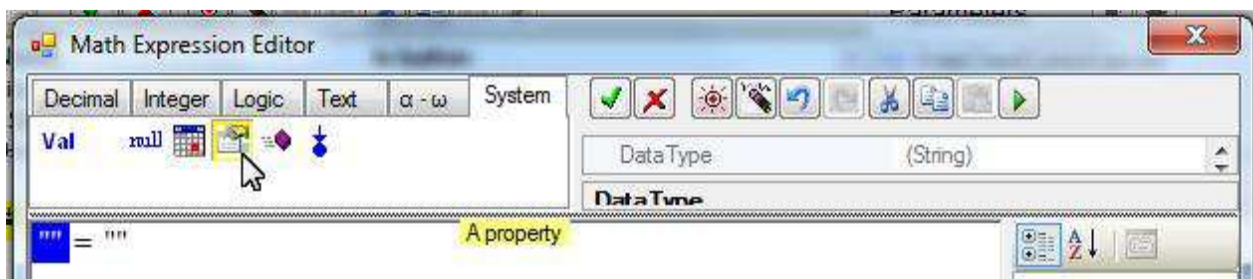
It is because that the tagName is case-insensitive. Different web browsers may return different cases. The above comparison operator is case-sensitive. We must use the `==?` operator from the Text tab:

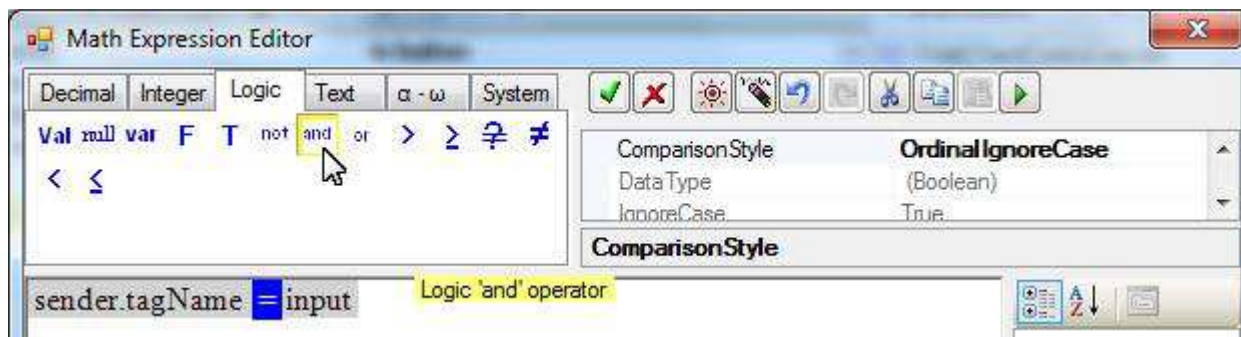
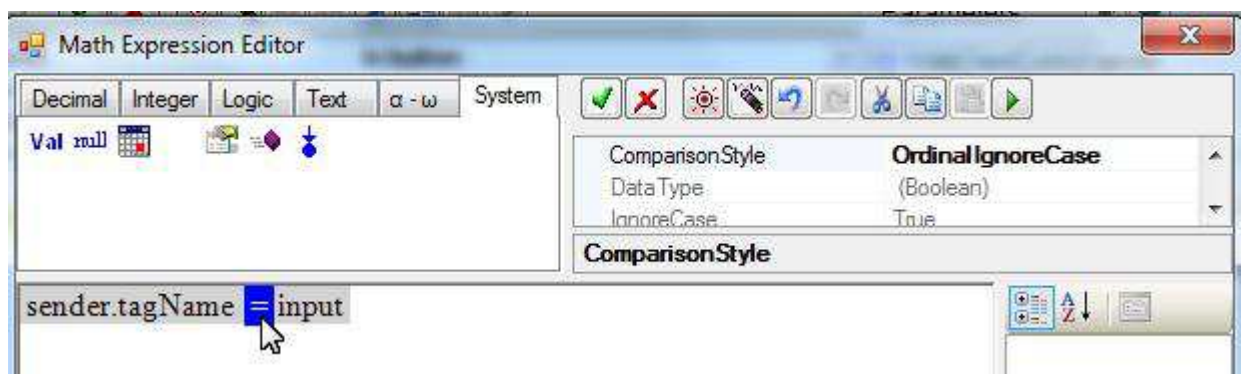
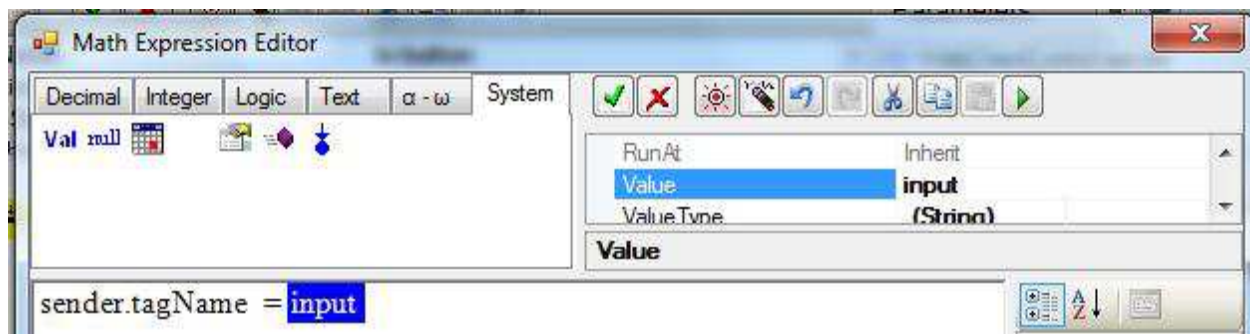
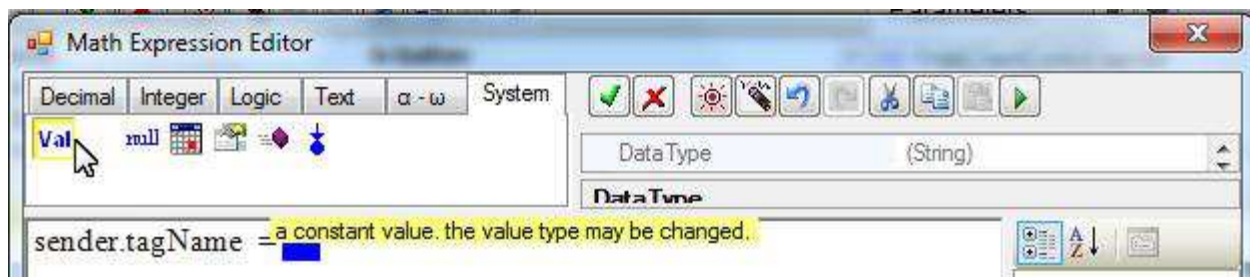


Note that this `==?` operator allows you to specify comparison options:

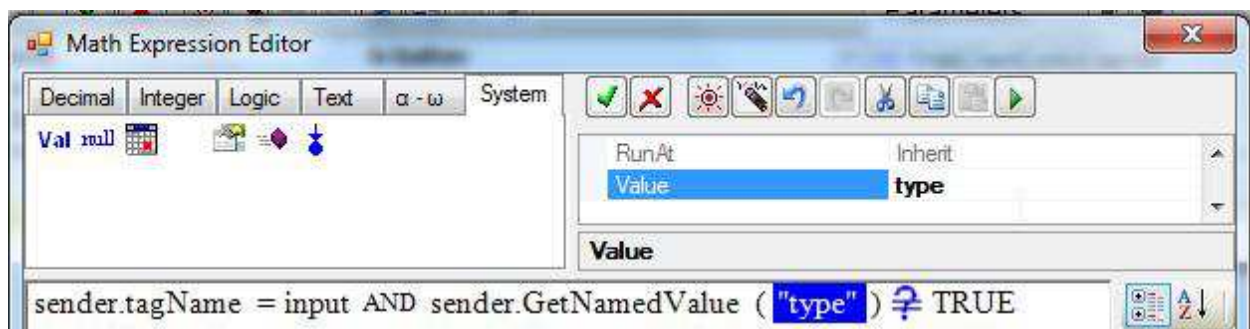
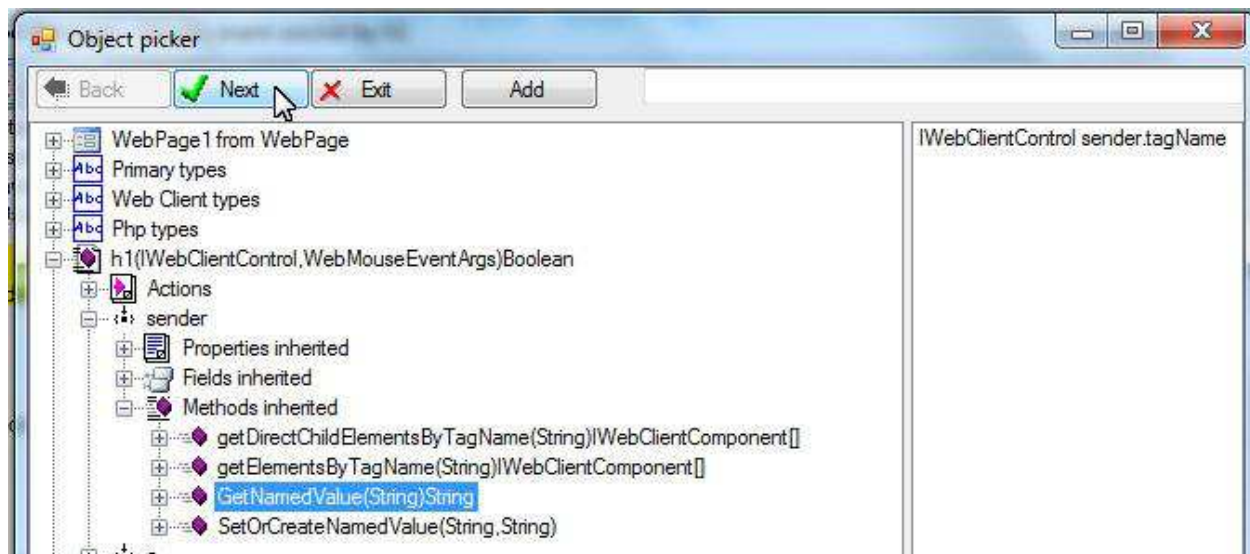
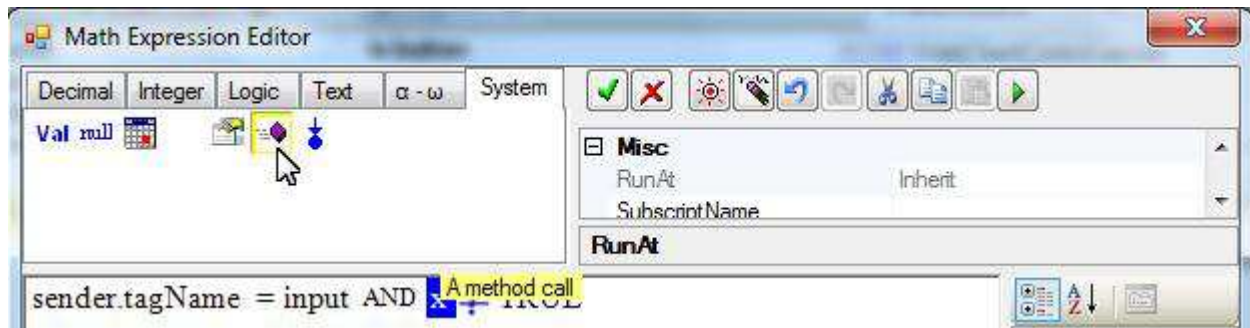
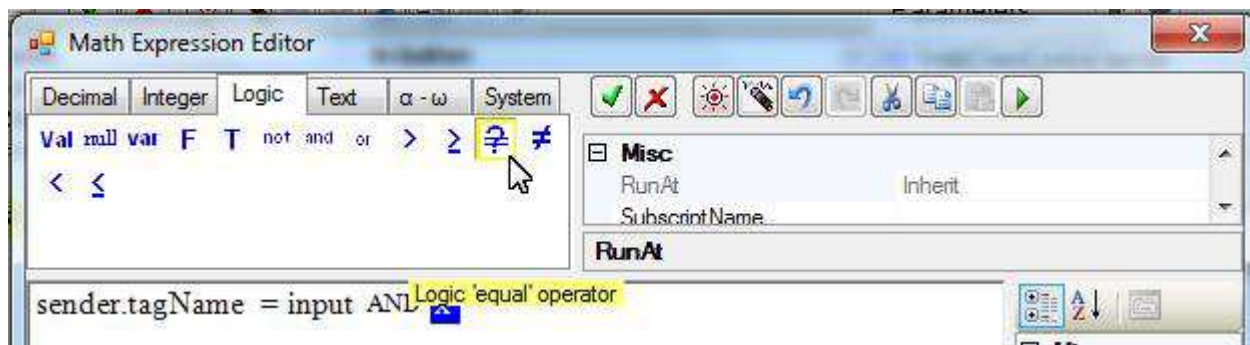


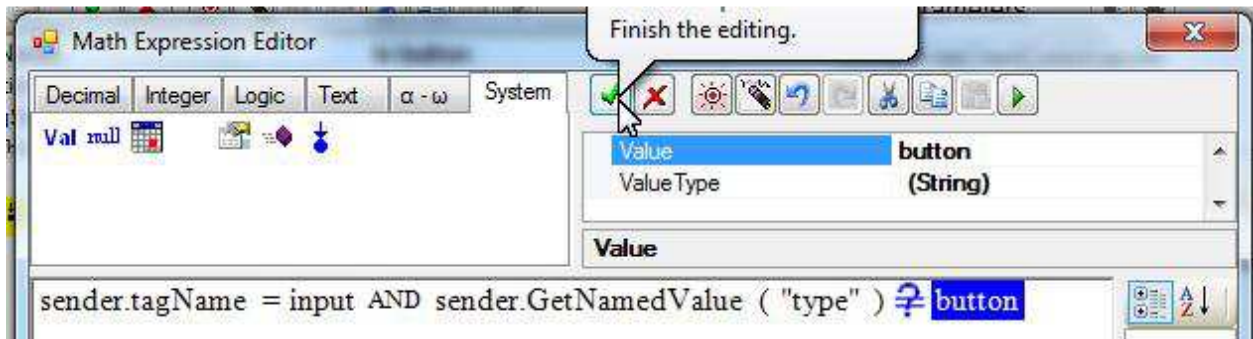
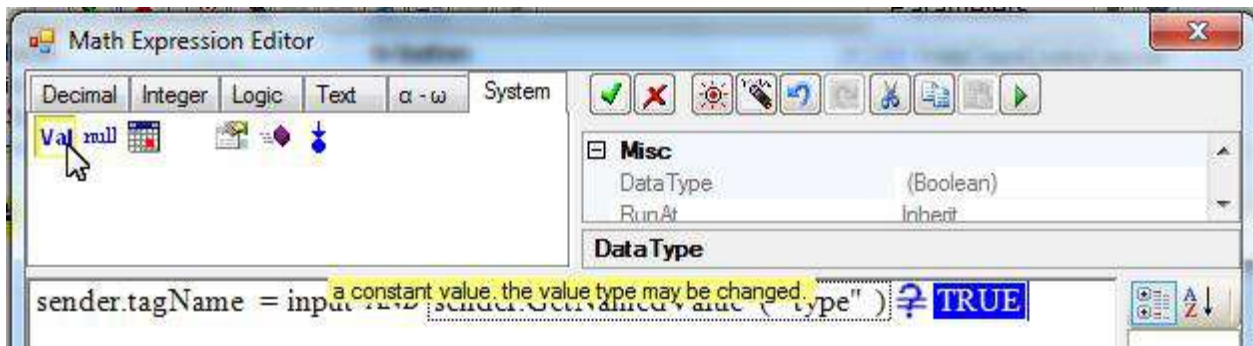
In our case, we should use "OrdinalIgnoreCase".



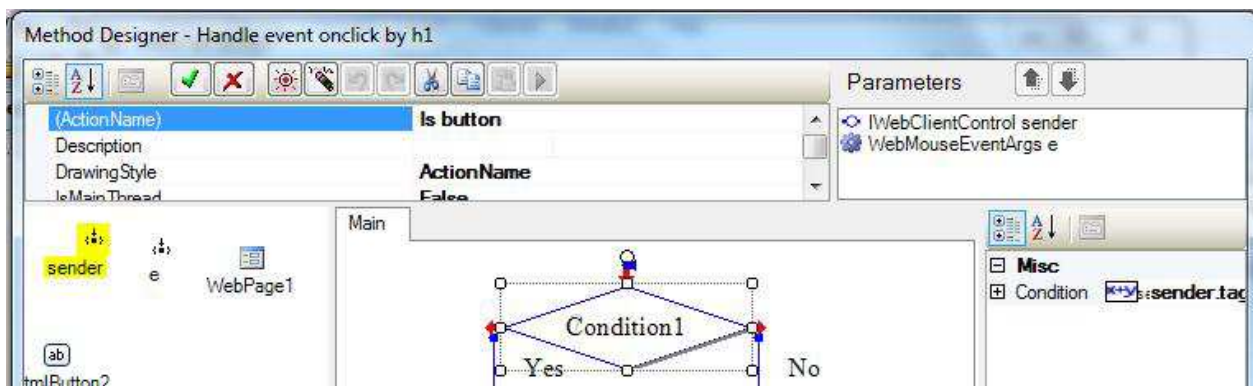


For checking sender.type = "button" we may use == from the Logic tab because this checking is case-sensitive:

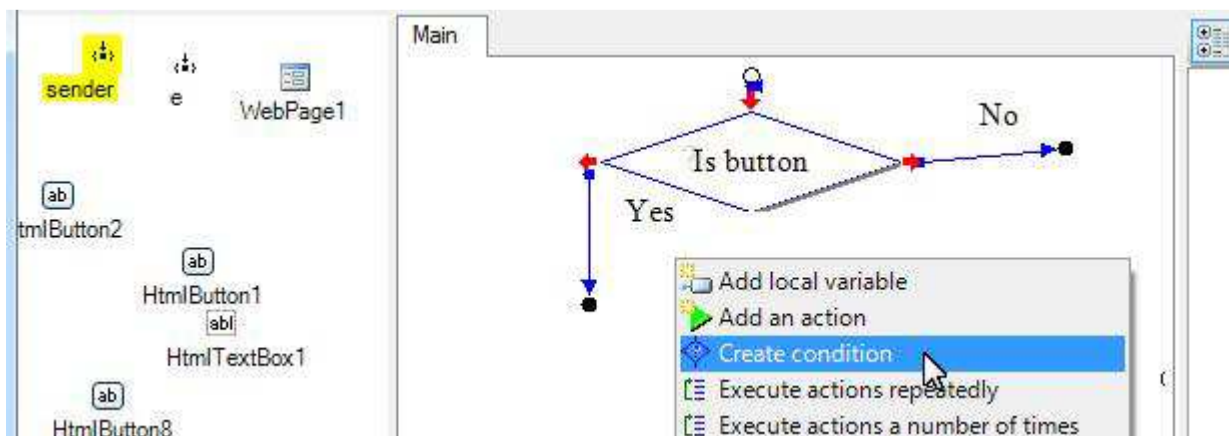




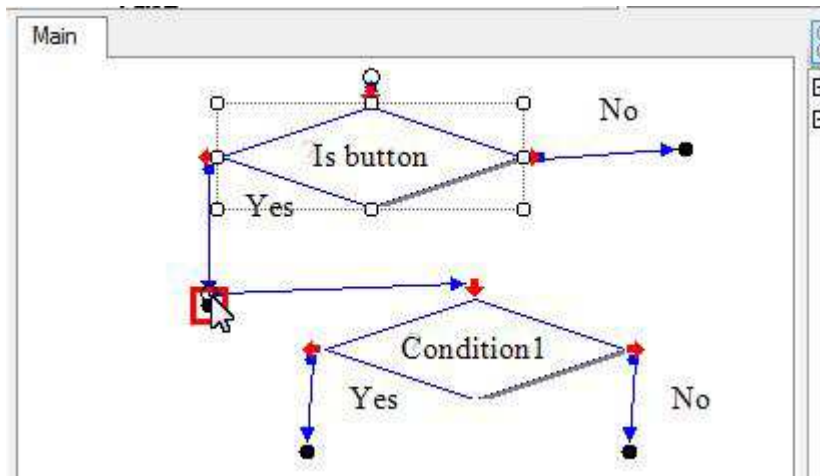
Change the condition name to "Is Button":



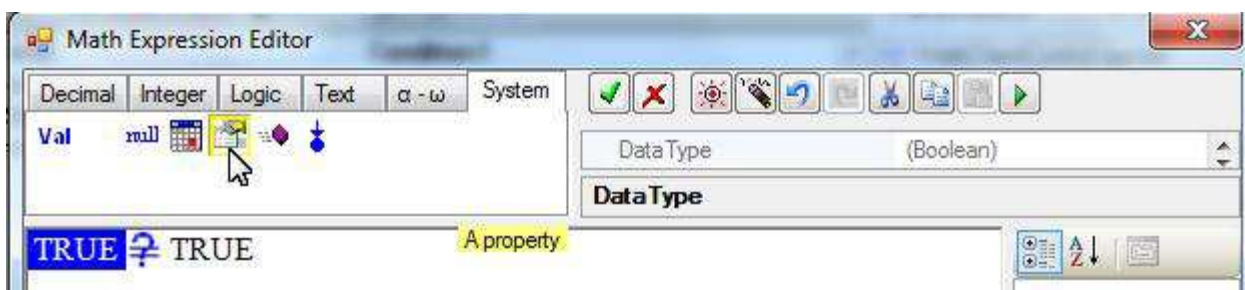
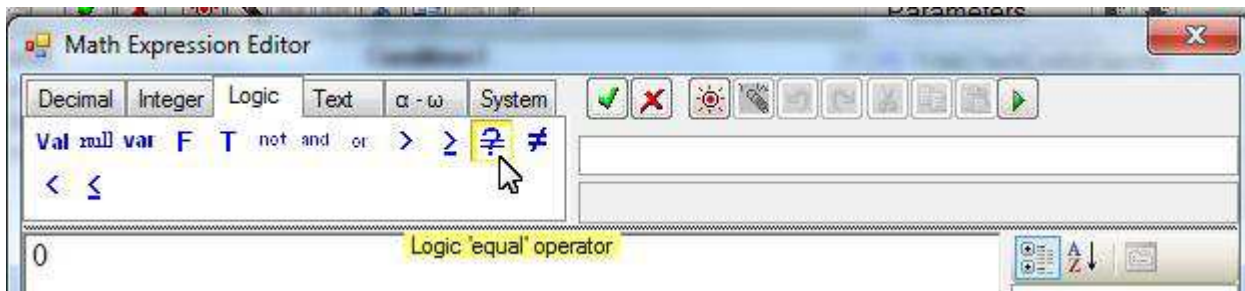
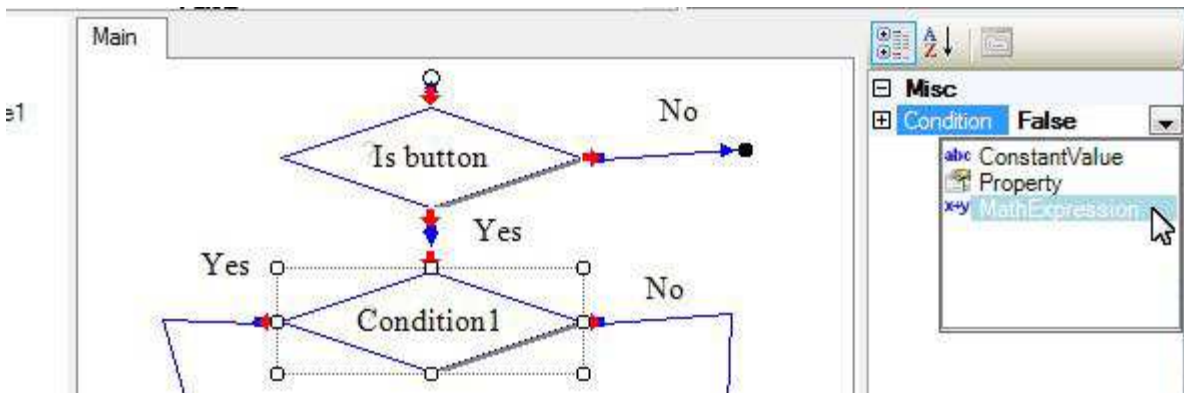
Add another condition action to check the background color of the sender:

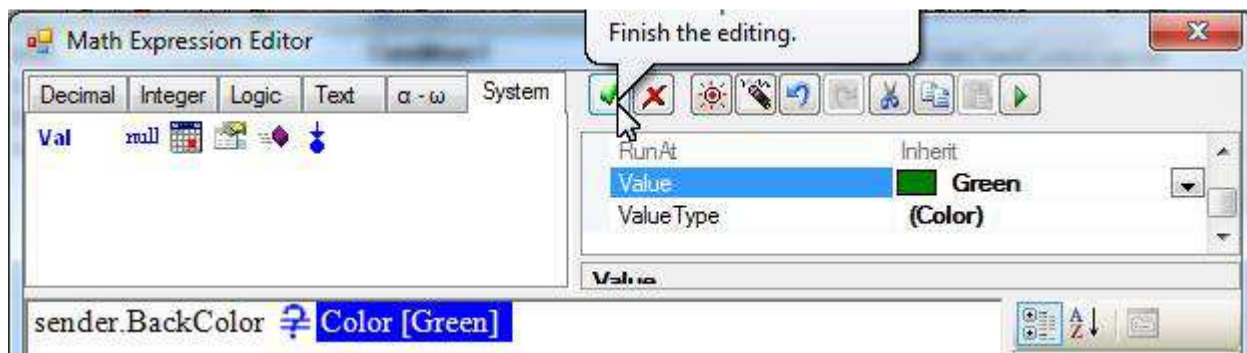
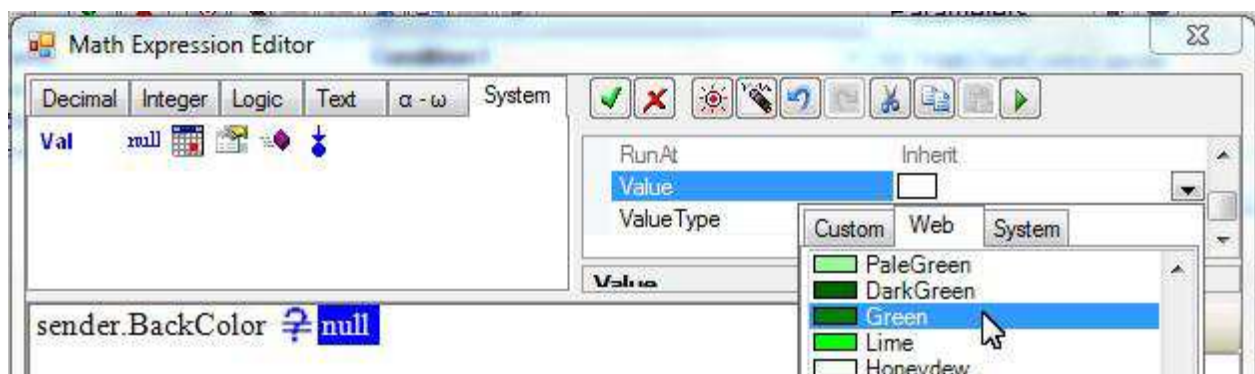
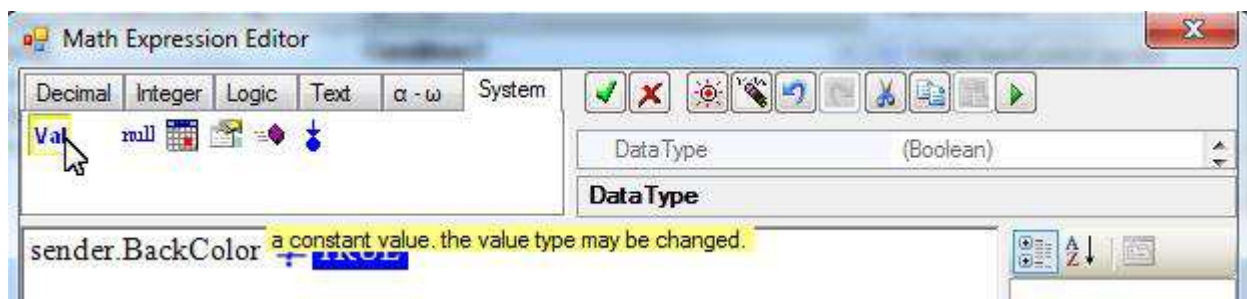
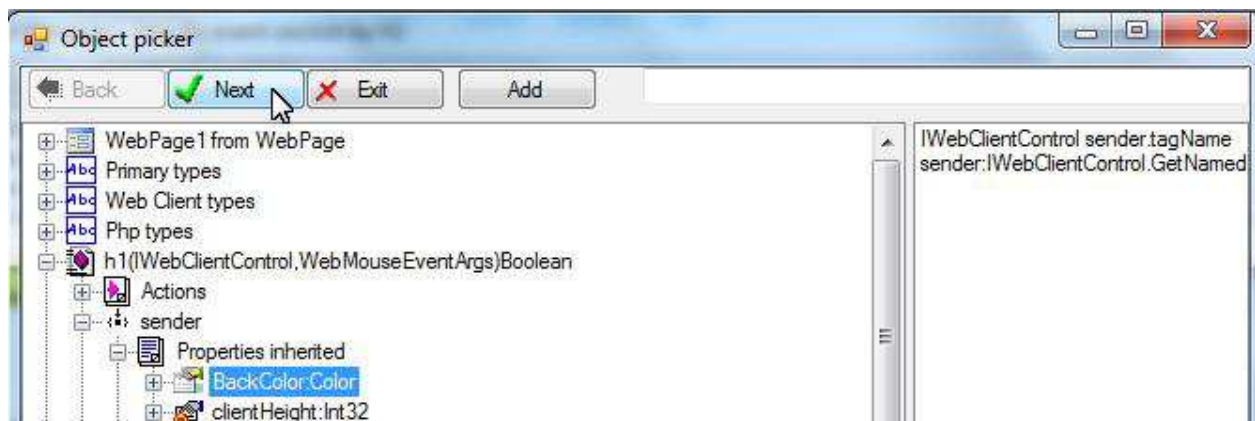


Link it to the Yes port of the last action:

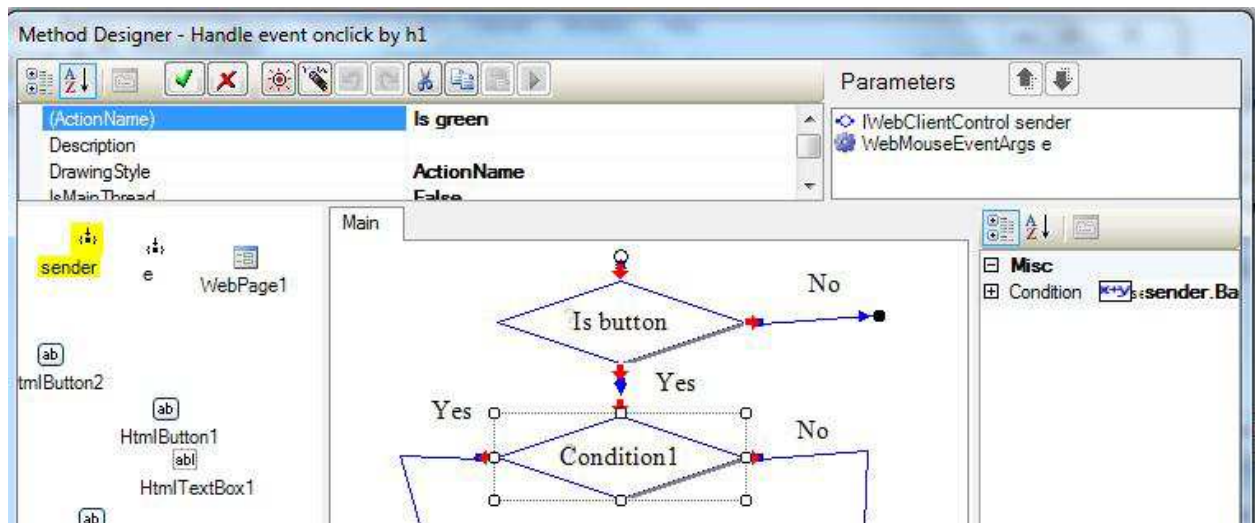


Set Condition to check background color:

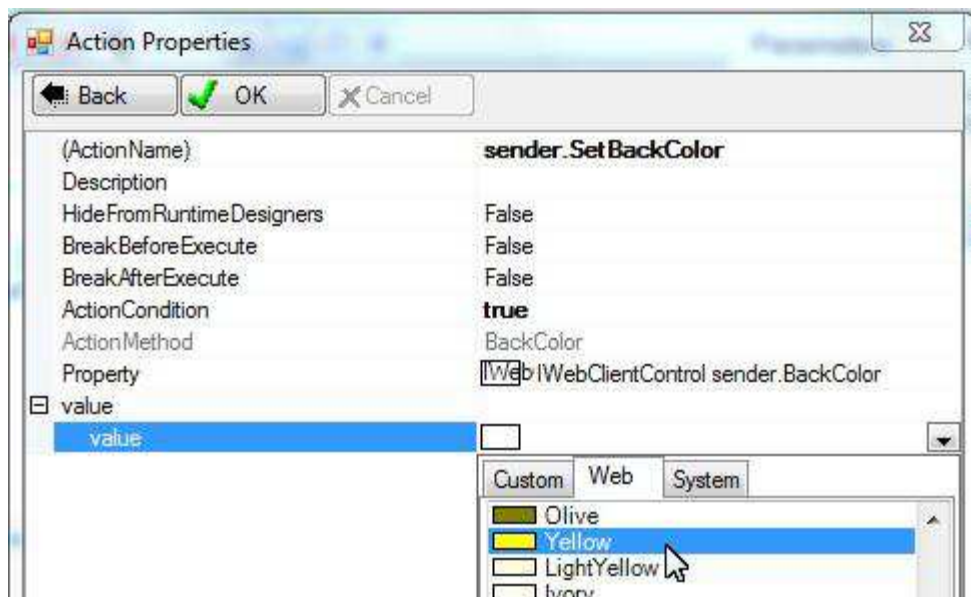


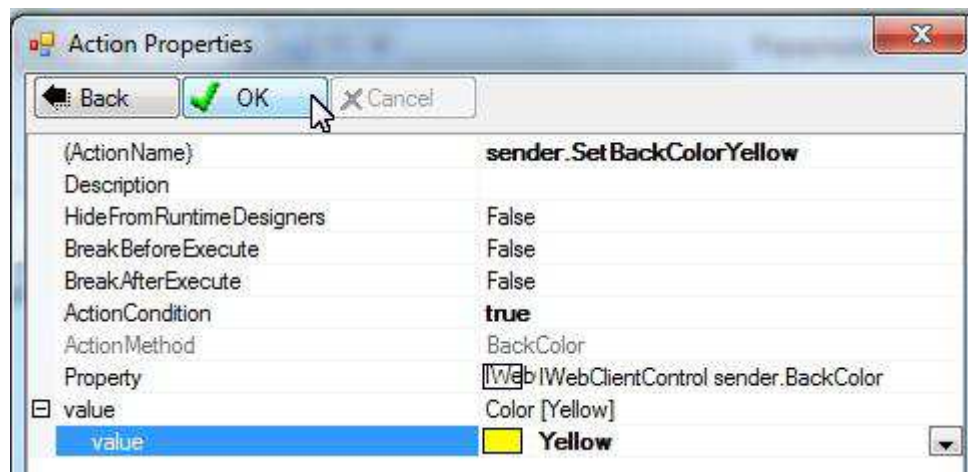


Change the condition name to "Is green":

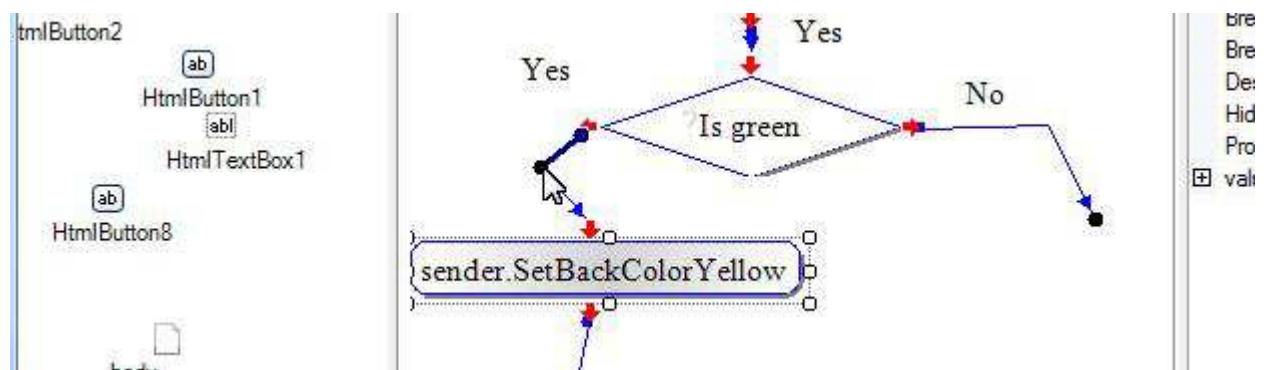


Create an action to set the background color of the sender to yellow:

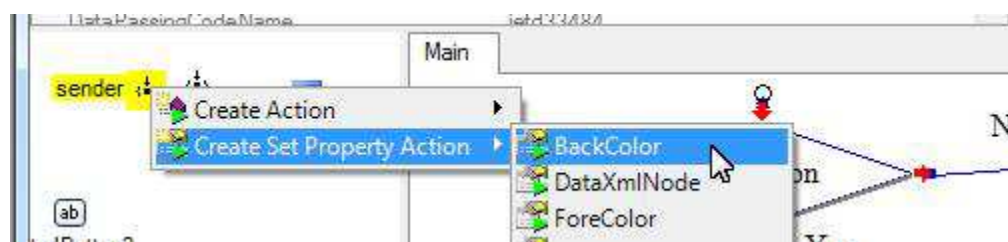


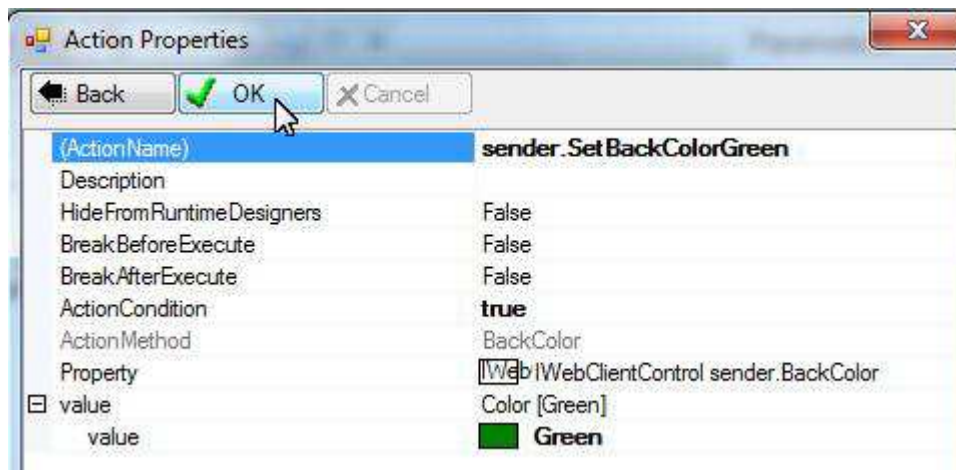
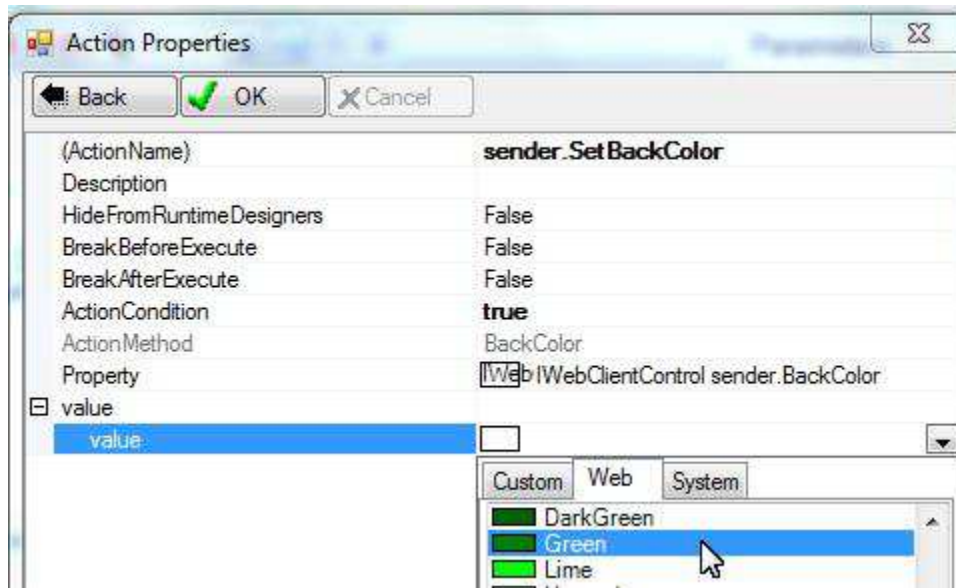


Link the action to the Yes port:

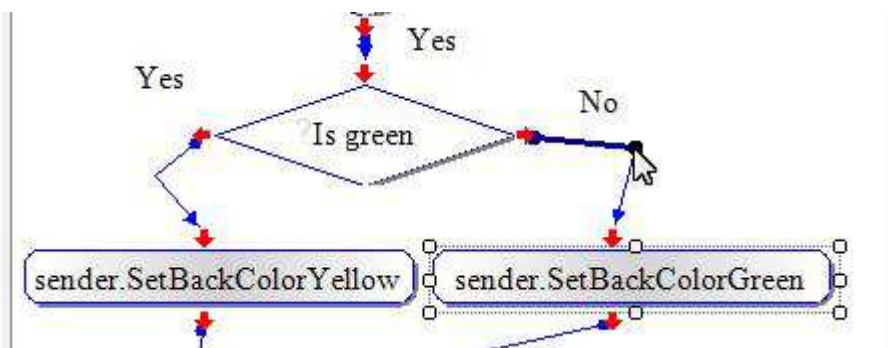


Create another action to set background color of the sender to green:

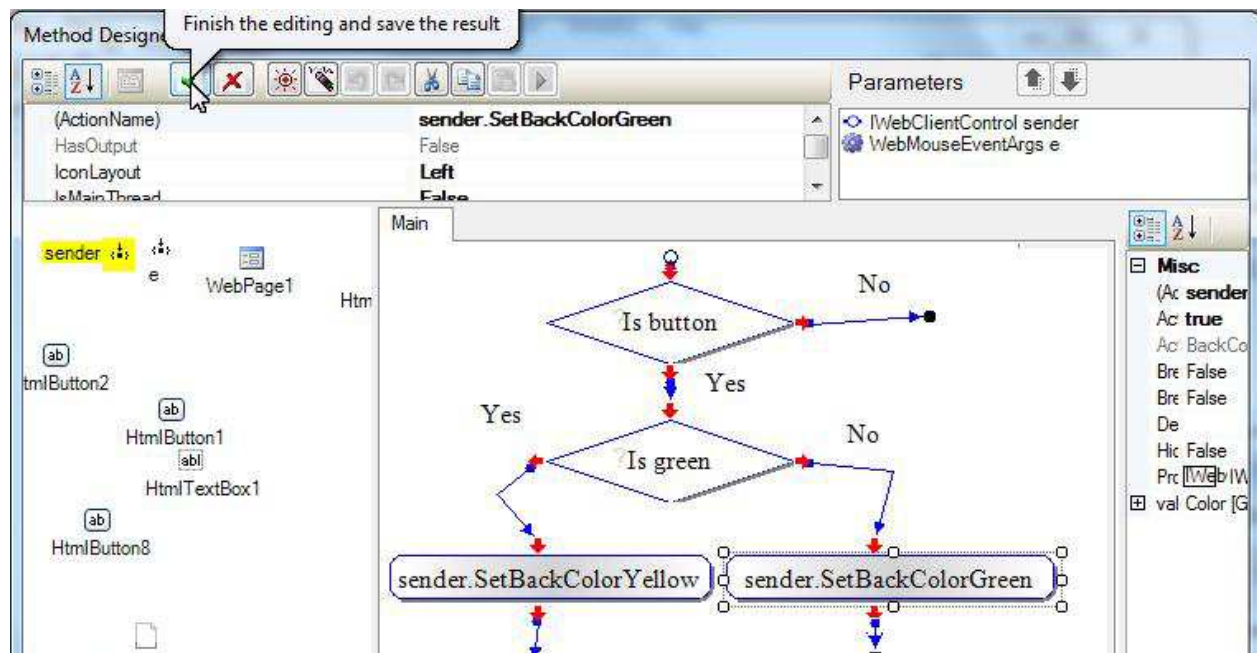




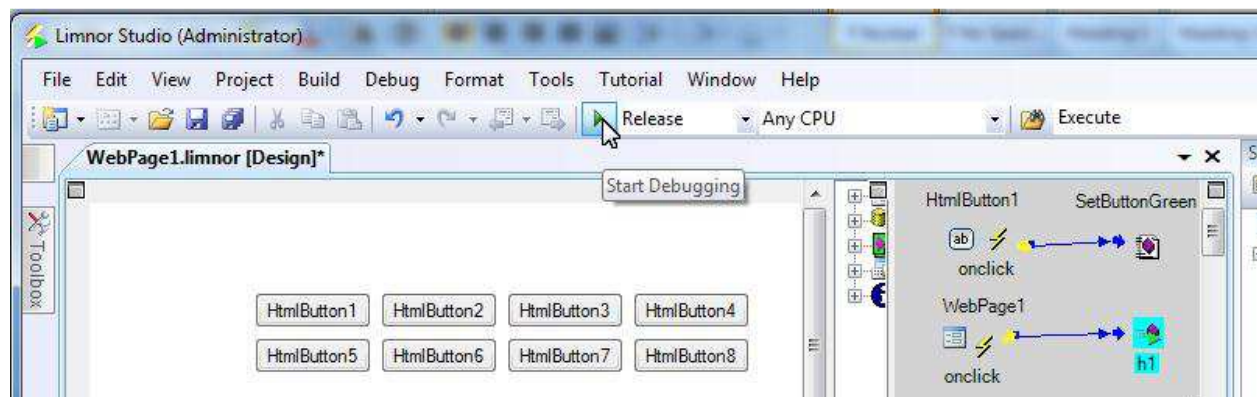
Link it to the No port:



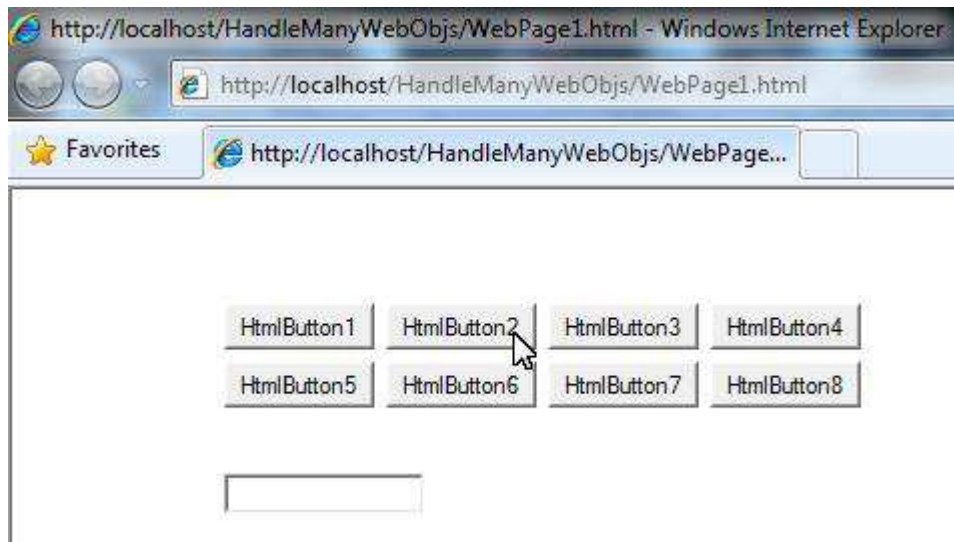
This is our event handler to handle click event from all buttons:



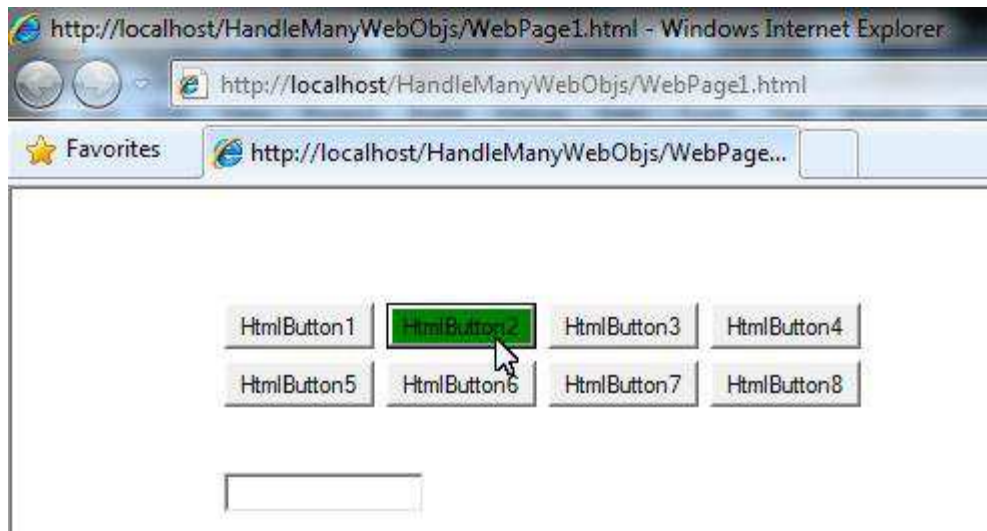
Test



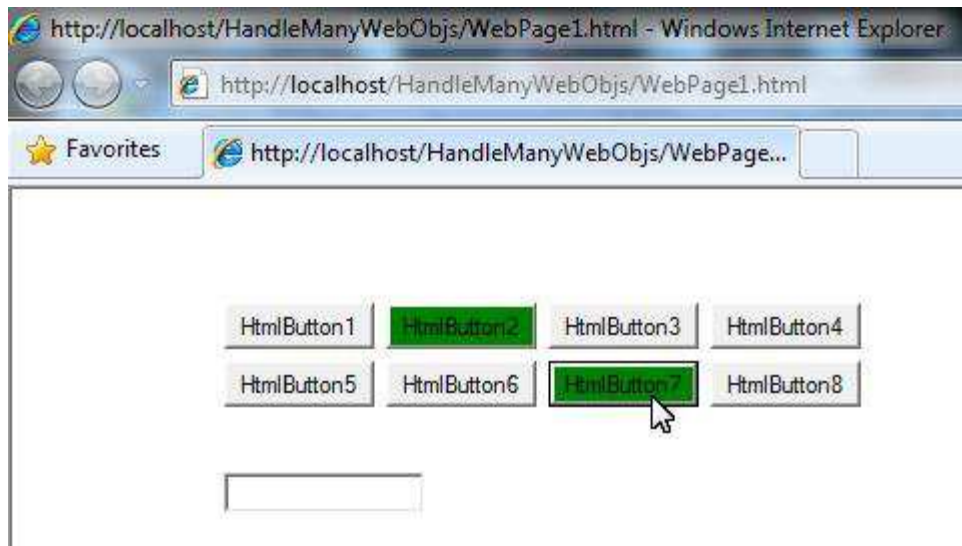
The page appears. Click a button:



The background color of the button becomes green:



Click another button, see, HtmlButton7, the button's background color also changes to green:



Click HtmlButton7 again, its background color changes to yellow:



Use tag property

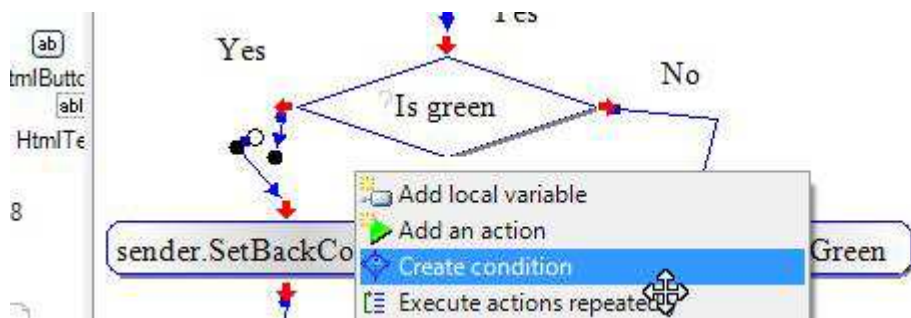
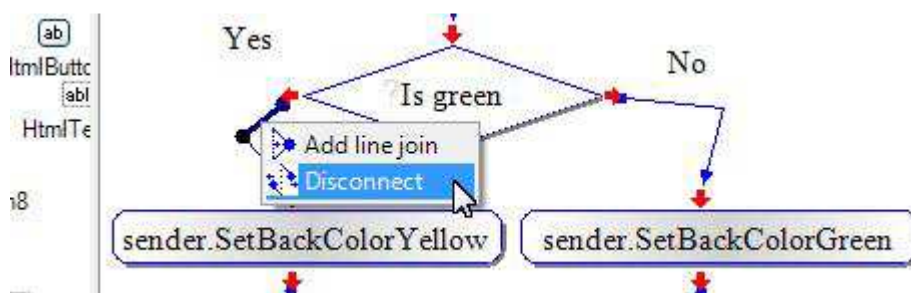
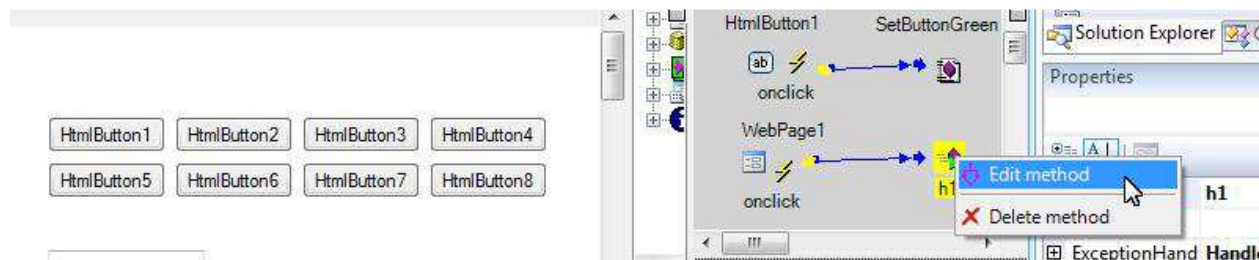
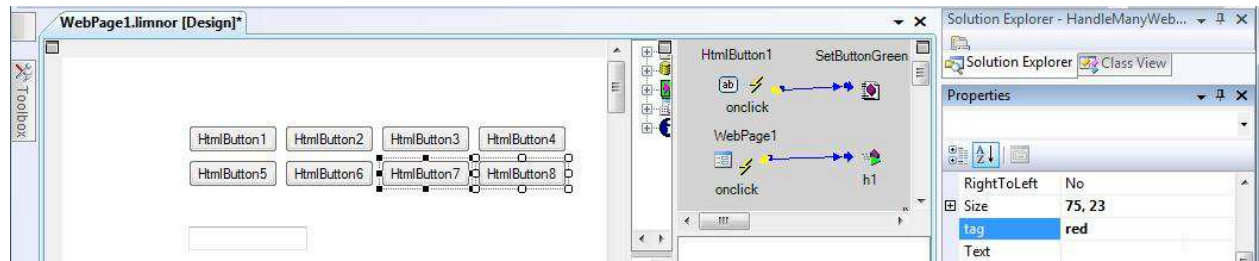
The above sample shows that one event handler can be used to handle a large number of elements. It uses a Condition action to identify buttons.

Suppose we want to handle the event based on button characteristics then we may use more condition actions.

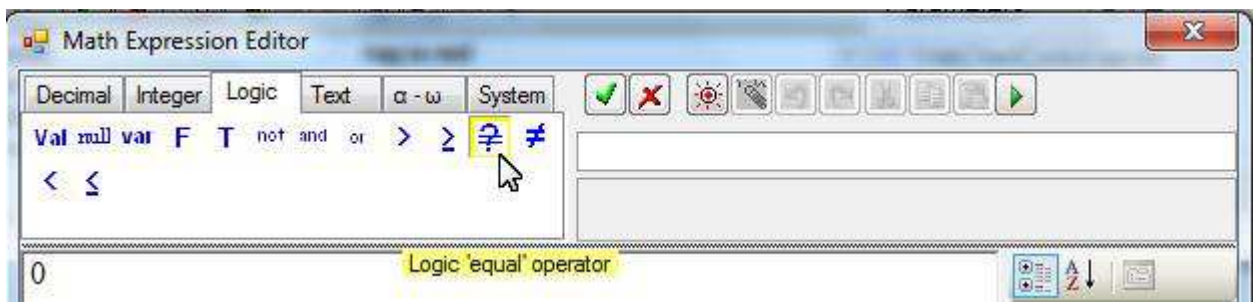
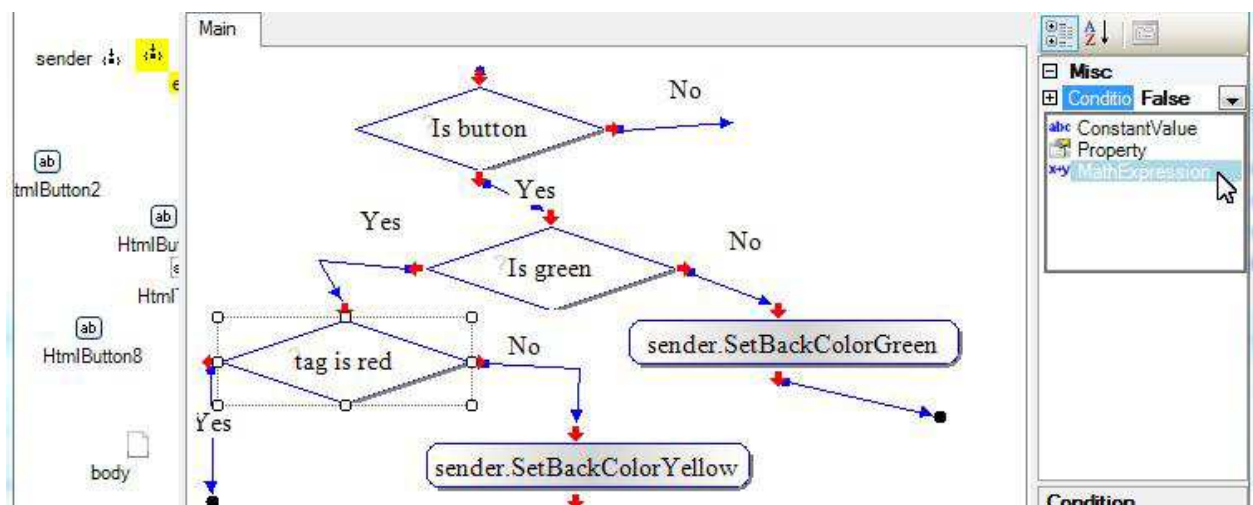
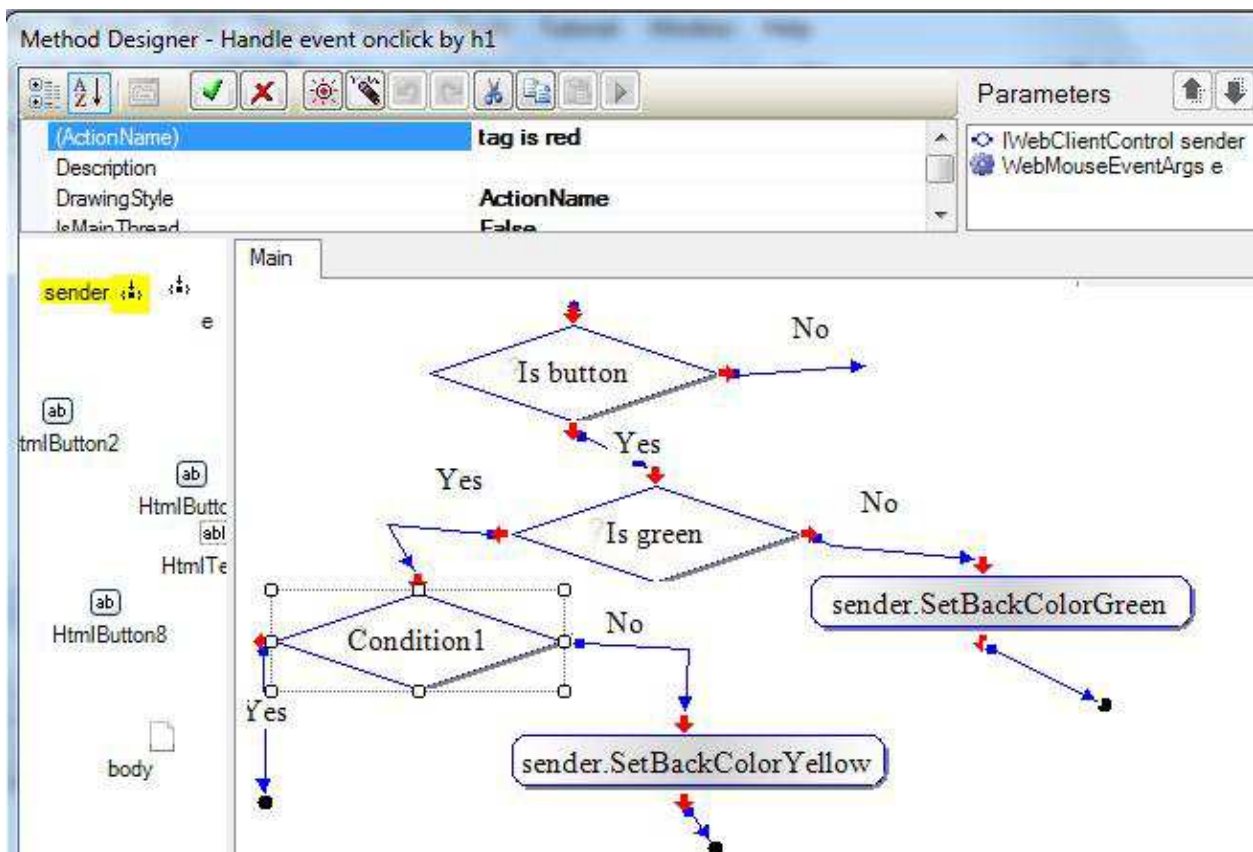
Every Html element has an “id” property. If the “id” is not empty then it will be unique. So we may use “id” to uniquely identify an element.

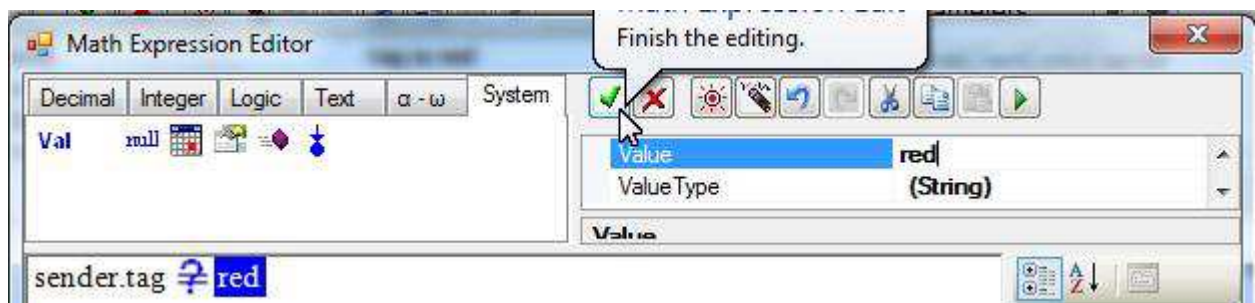
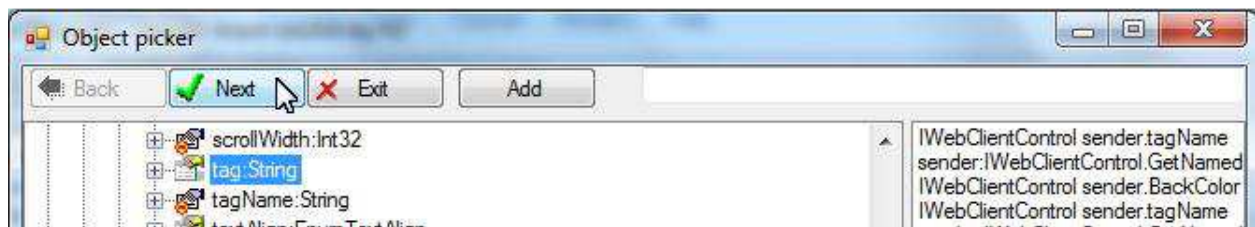
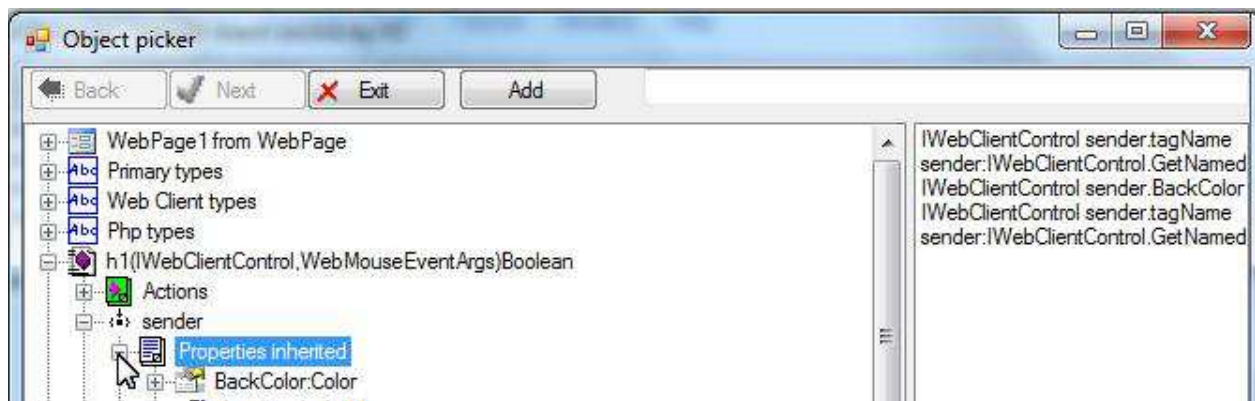
Every element also has a “tag” property, which is a string. There is not restriction on what text you may assign to it. You may assign value to it both at runtime and design time.

For example, let's set tag to "red" for button 7 and button 8. Modify the handler so that if the tag is "red" then instead of setting background color to yellow we set it to red.

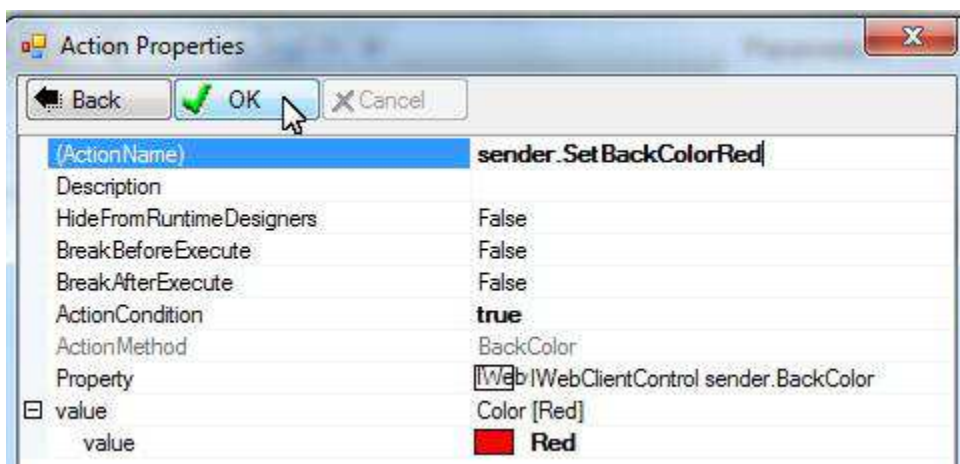
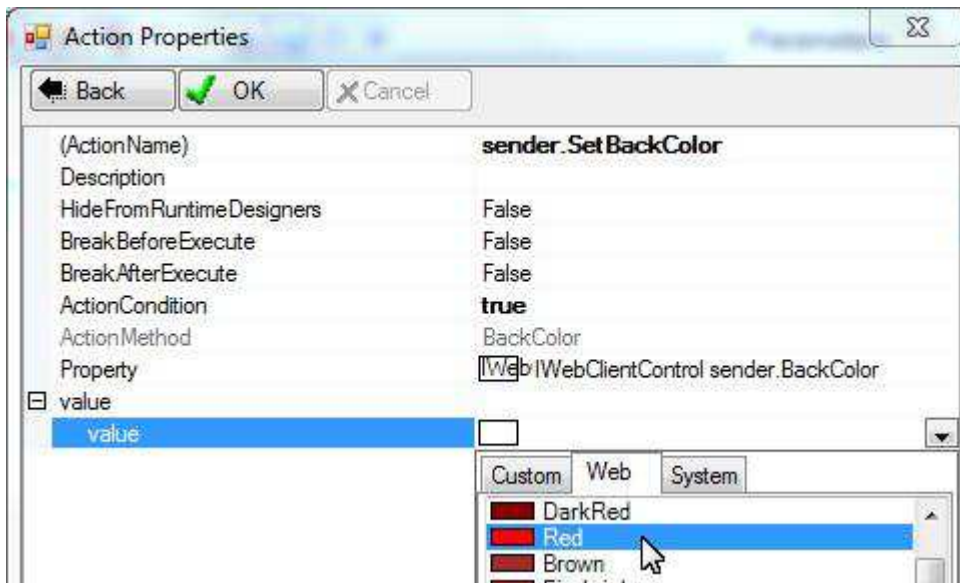


Insert a Condition to check tag = "red":

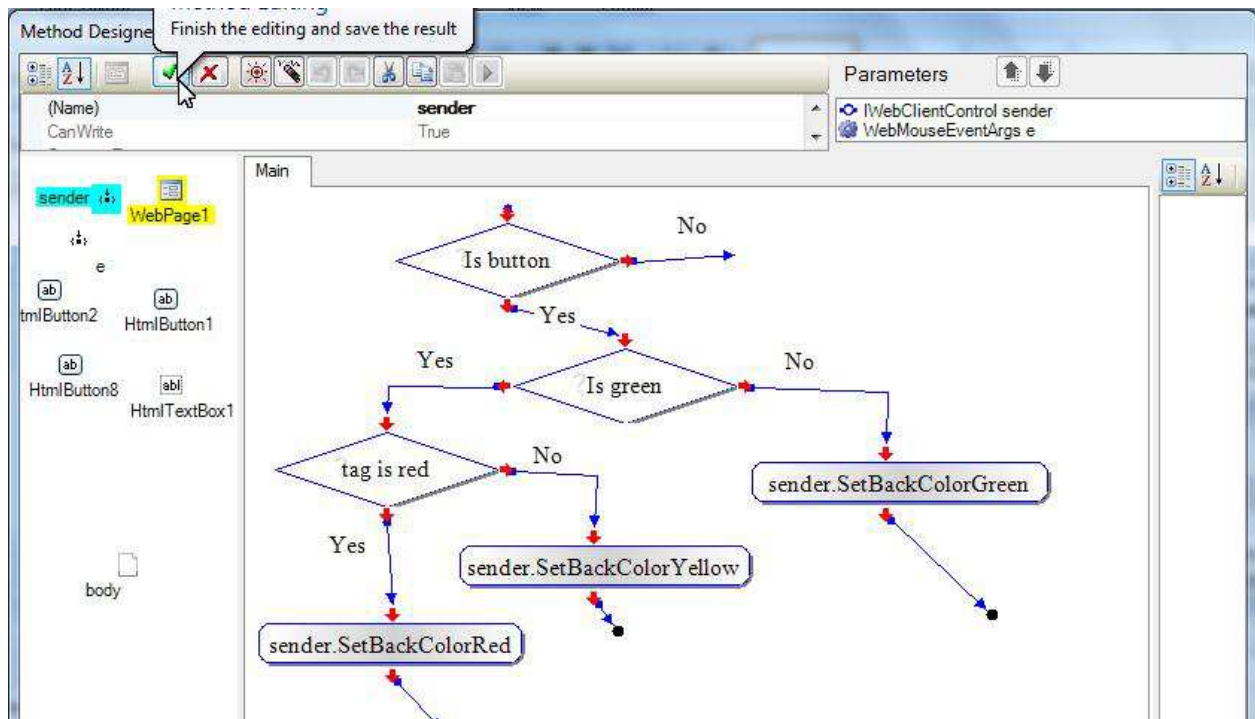




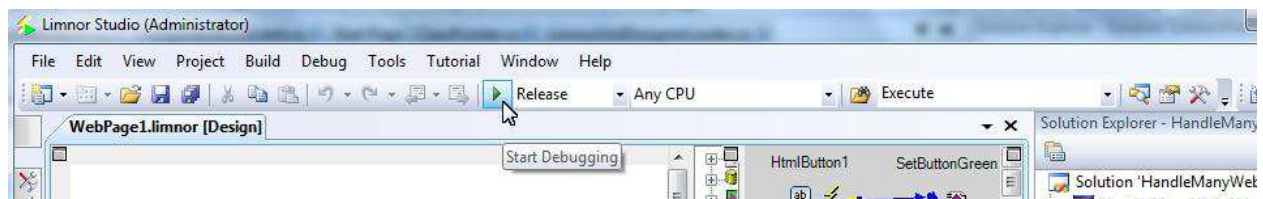
Create another action to set the background color of the sender to red:



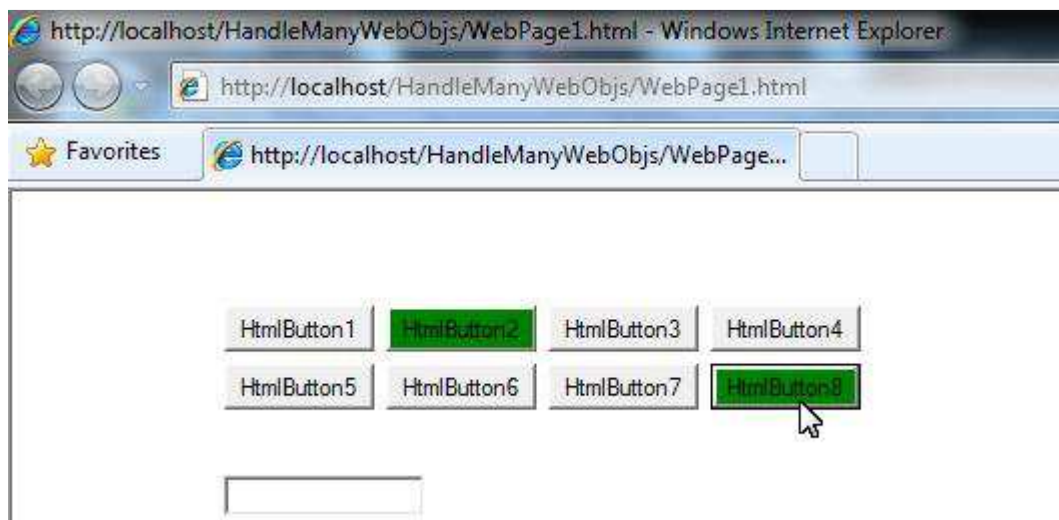
Link it to the Yes port of the condition. This is our new event handler:



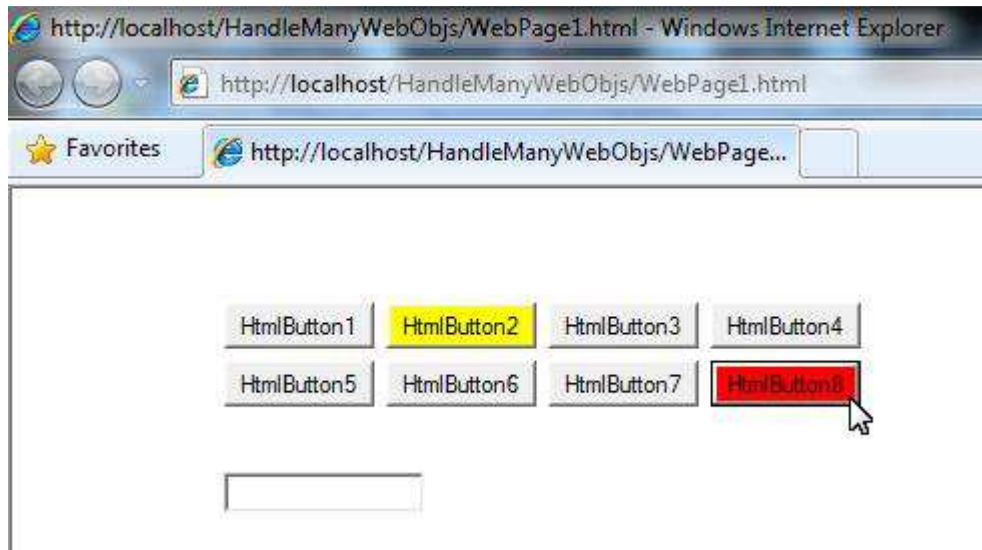
Run it again:



Click button 2 and button 8, the buttons' background color change to green:



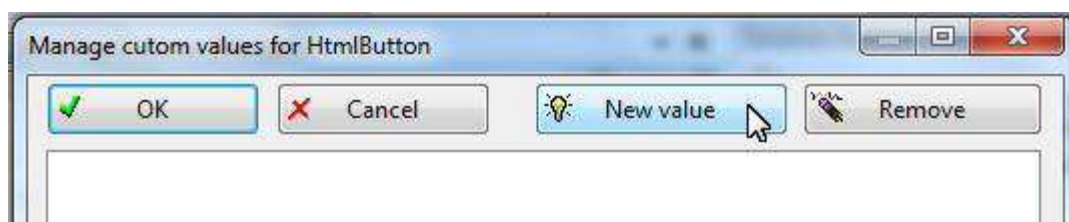
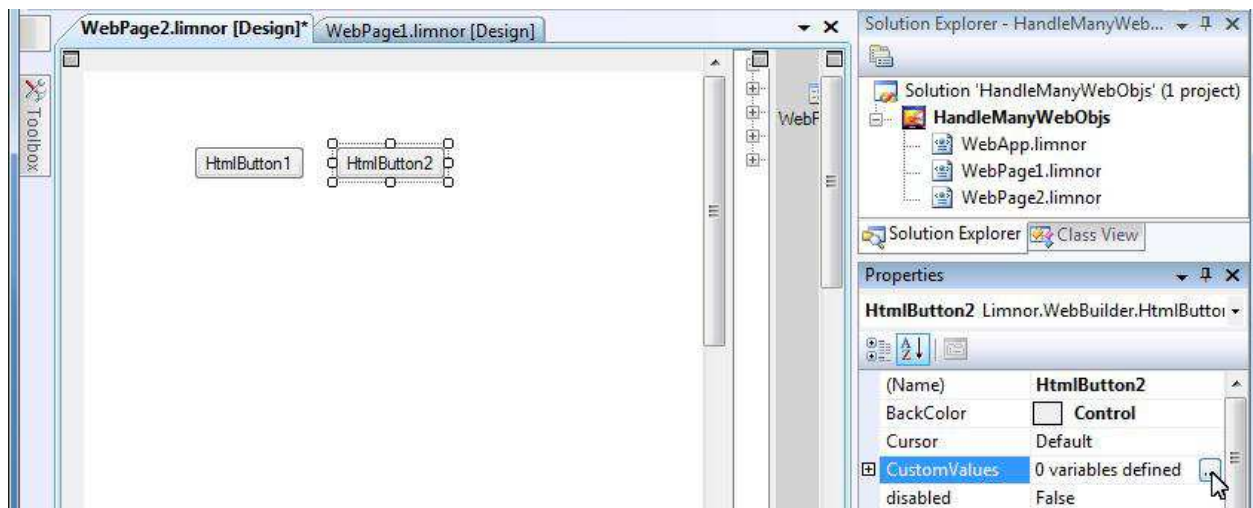
Click button 2 and button 8 again, button 2's background color becomes yellow and button 8's background color becomes red:

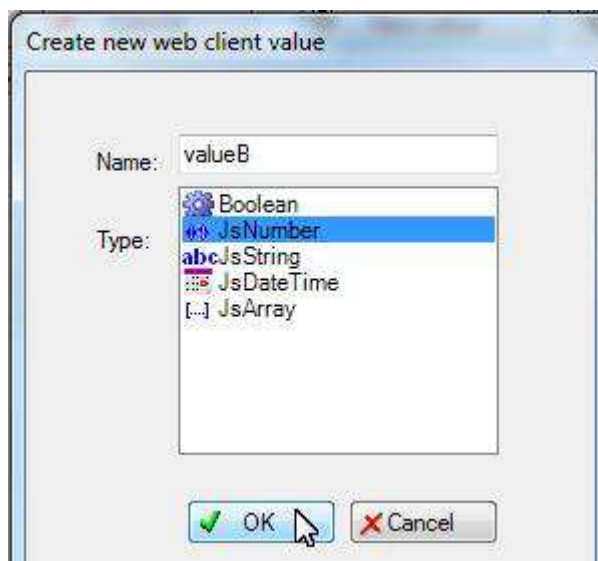
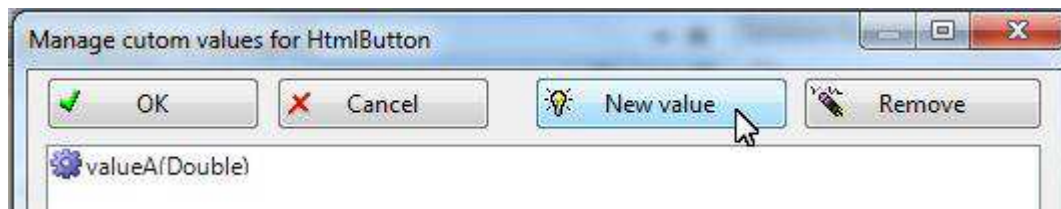
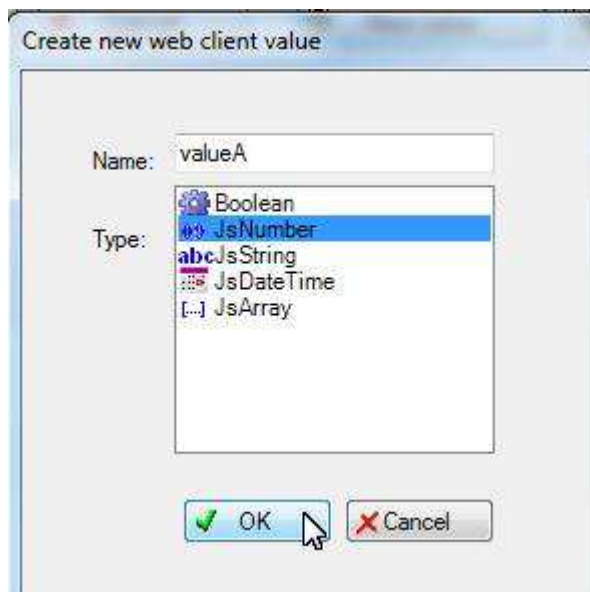


Use named values

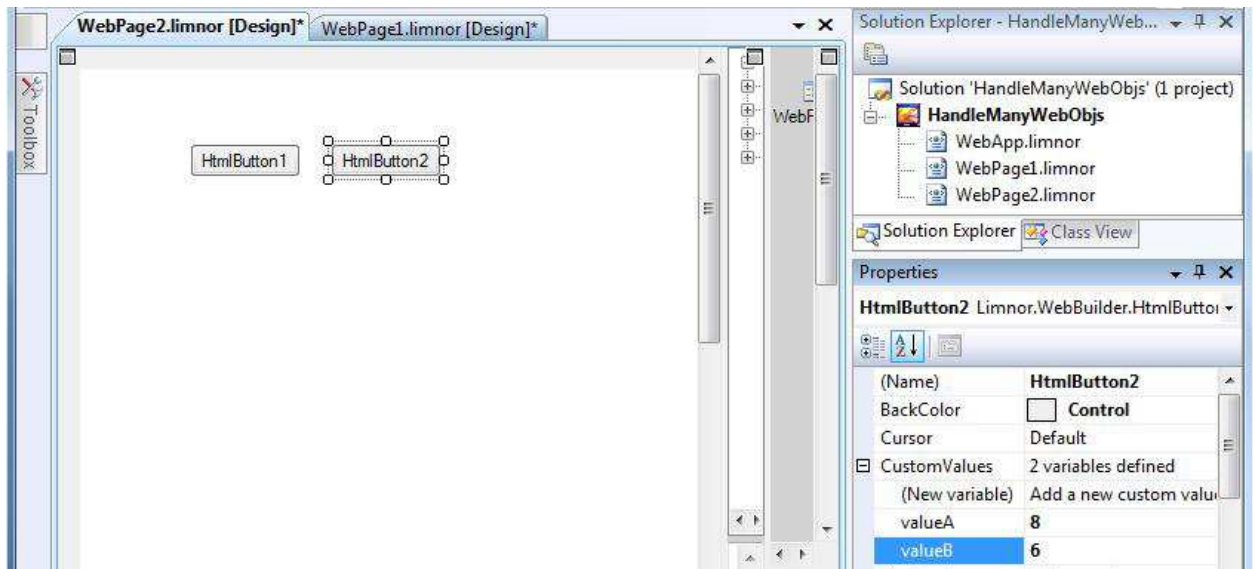
The tag property is a convenient way of associating a piece of information with an element. We may also associate more values to an element.

At design time, we may associate values to an element by setting its CustomValues property:



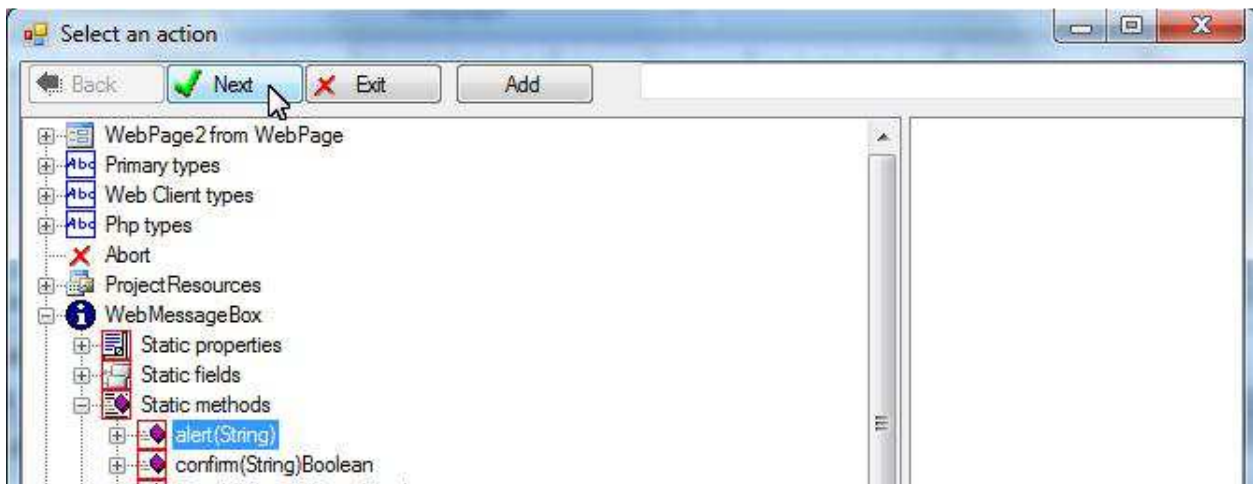
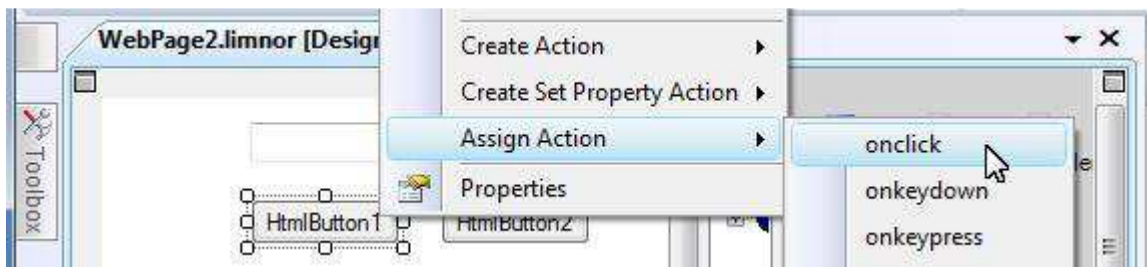


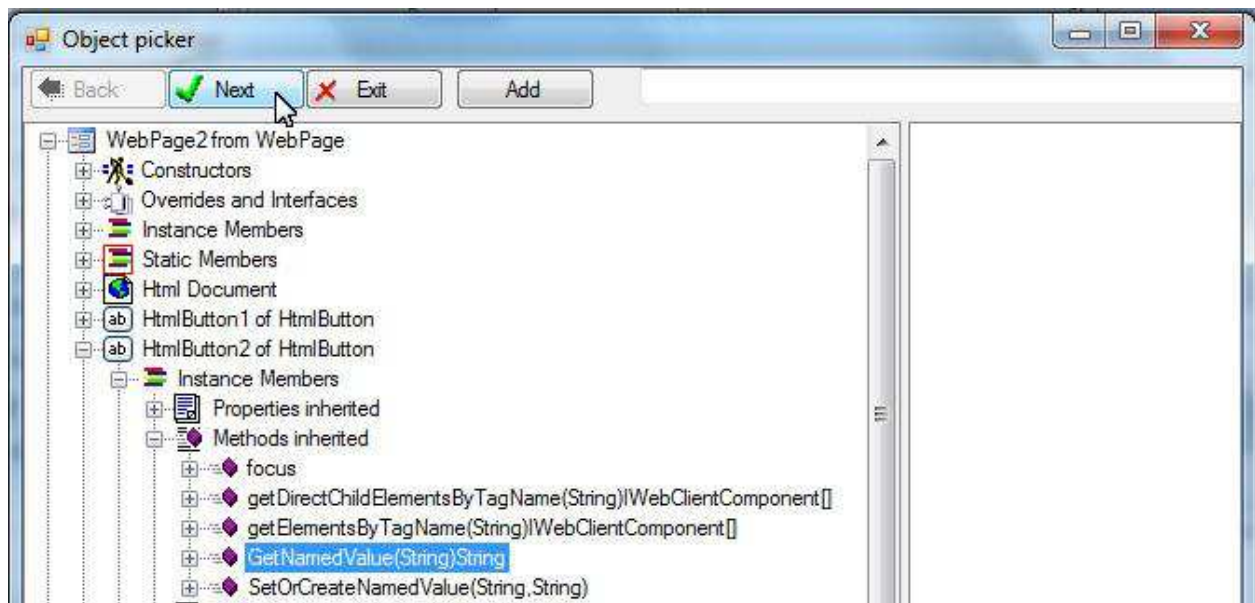
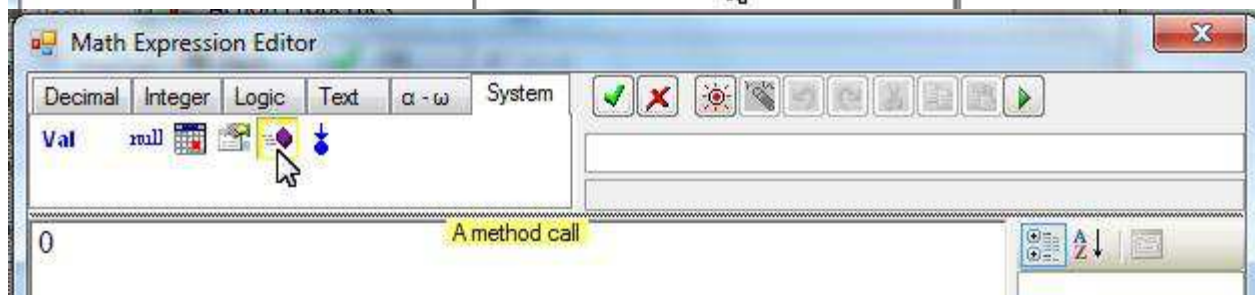
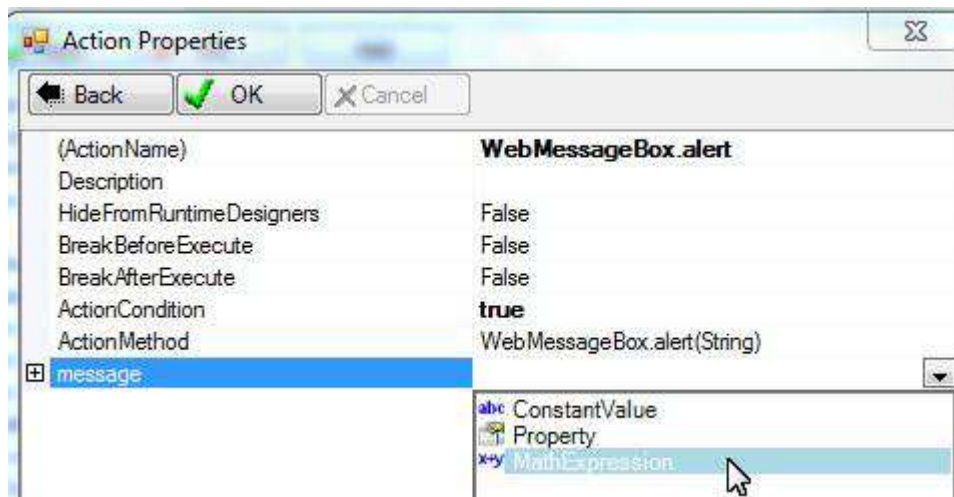
Values can be set at design time:

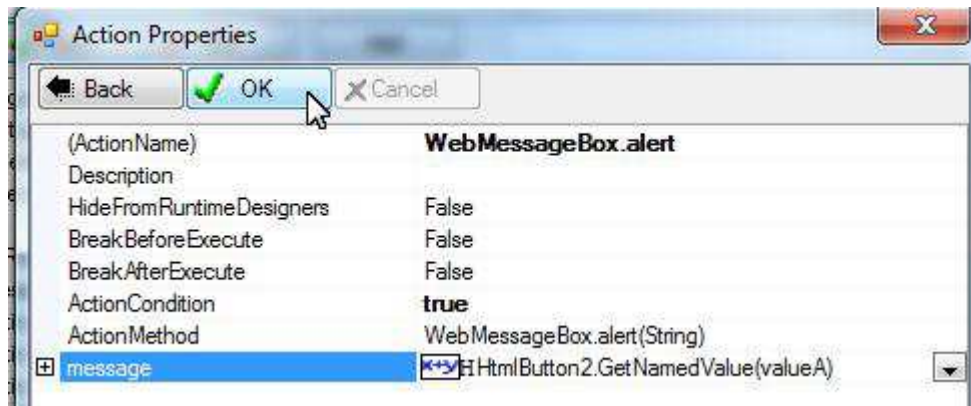
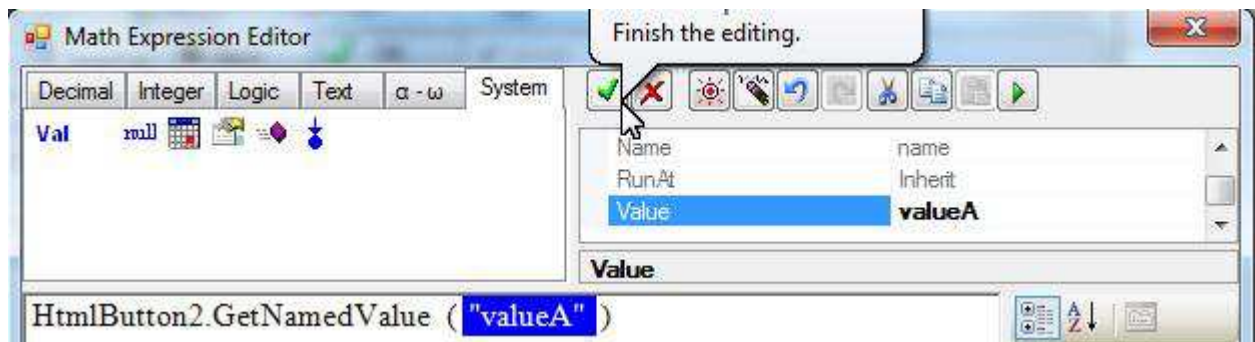


At runtime, GetNamedValue can be used to get a value; SetOrCreateNamedValue can be used to associate a value to an element.

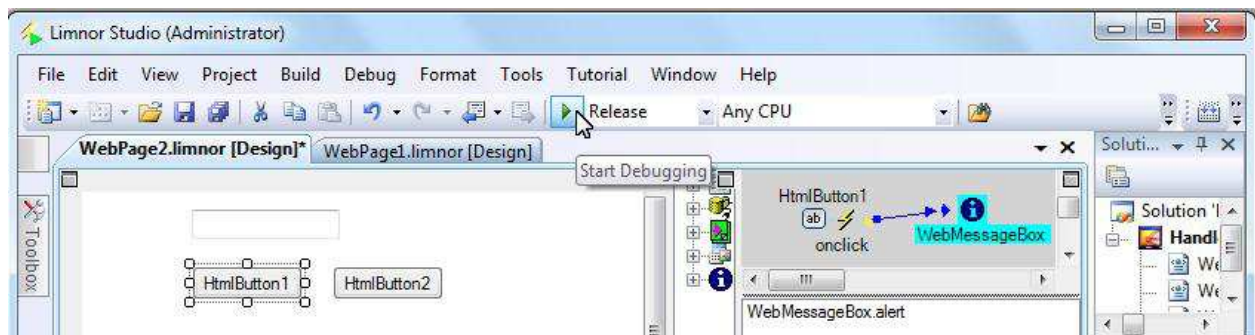
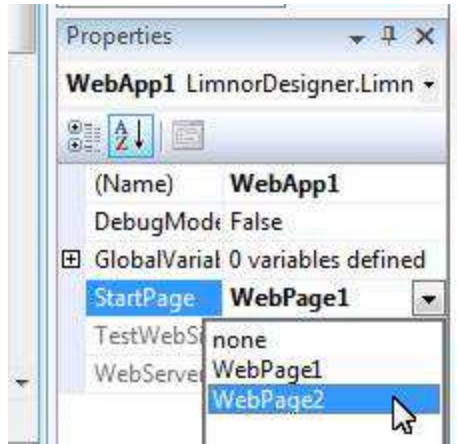
Let's use a message box to show value of valueA:







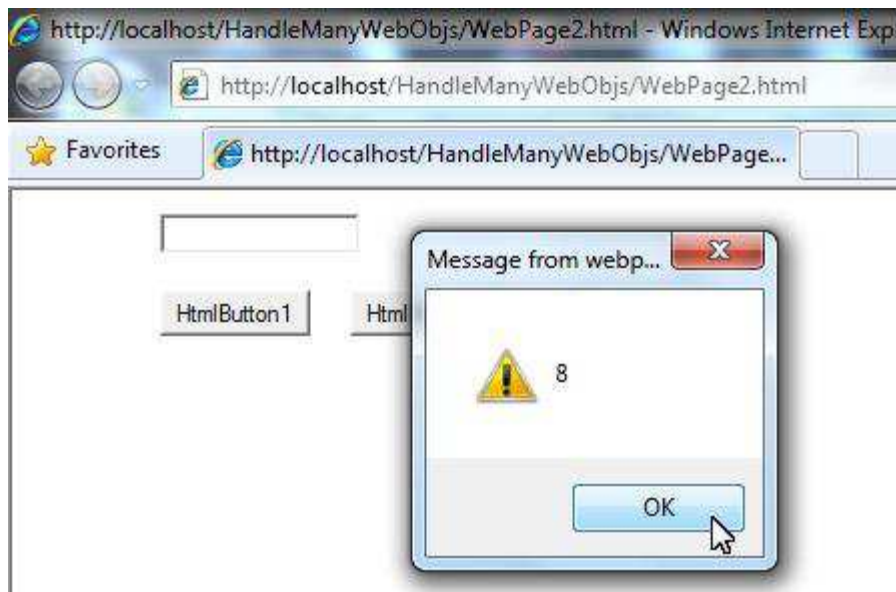
Let's test it:



Click the button:

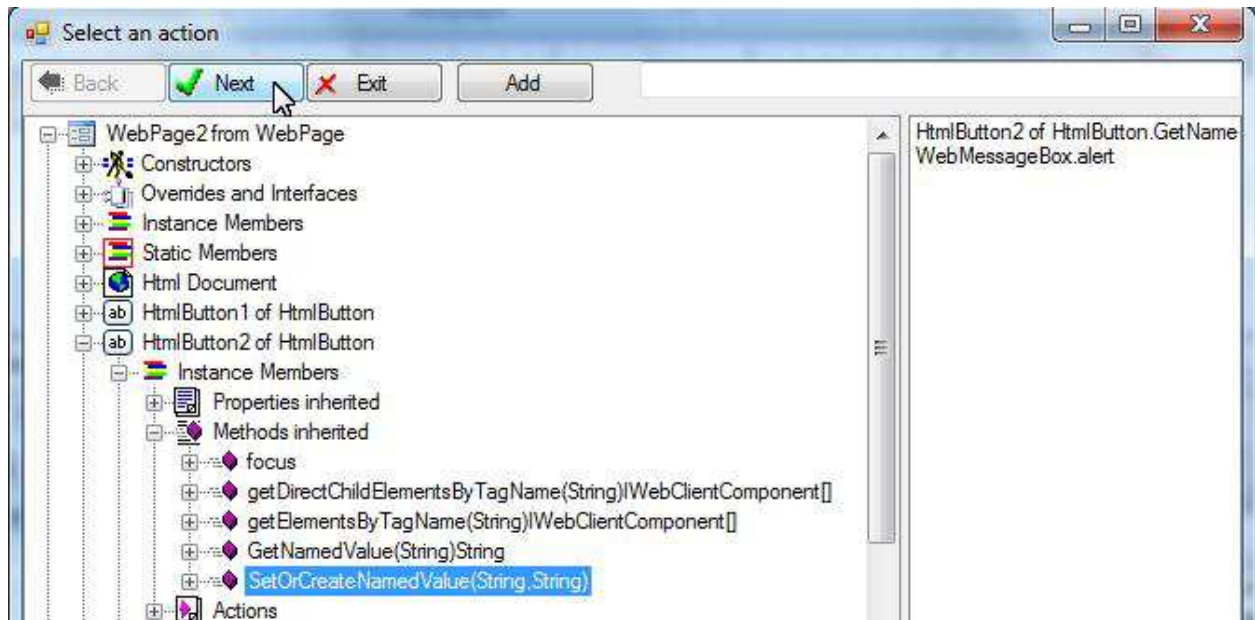


A message box appears showing the value we set at design time:

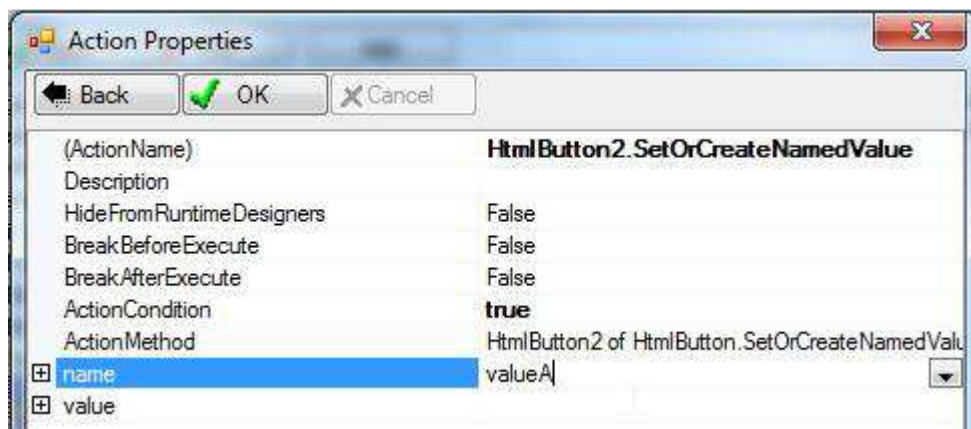


Let's use SetOrCreateNamedValue to modify values at runtime:

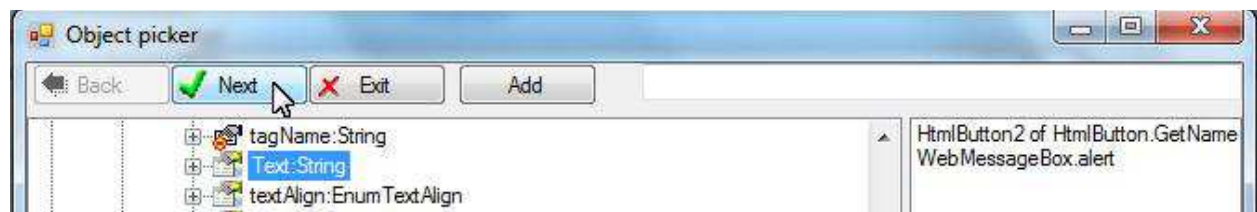
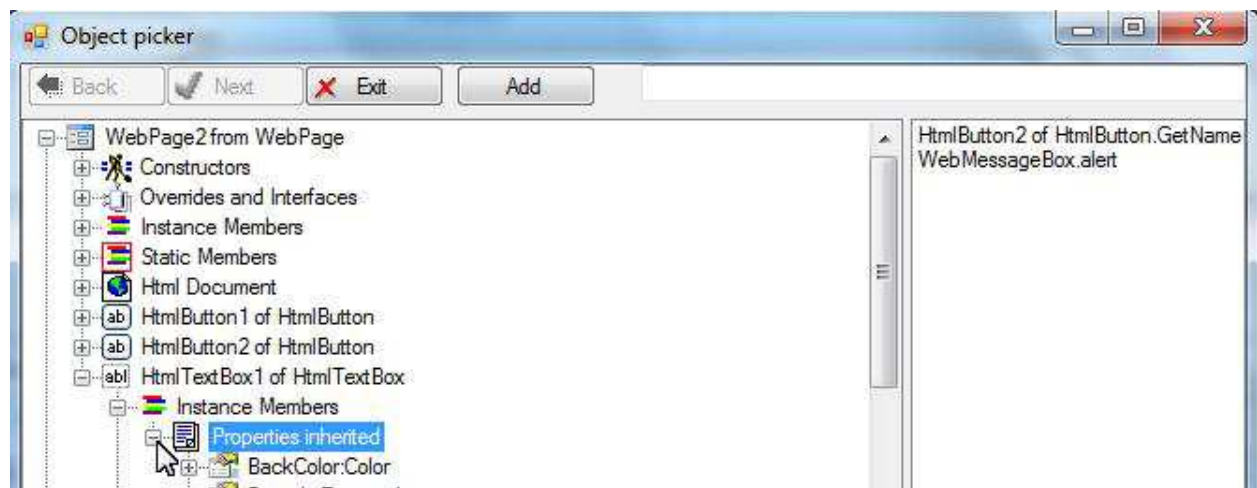
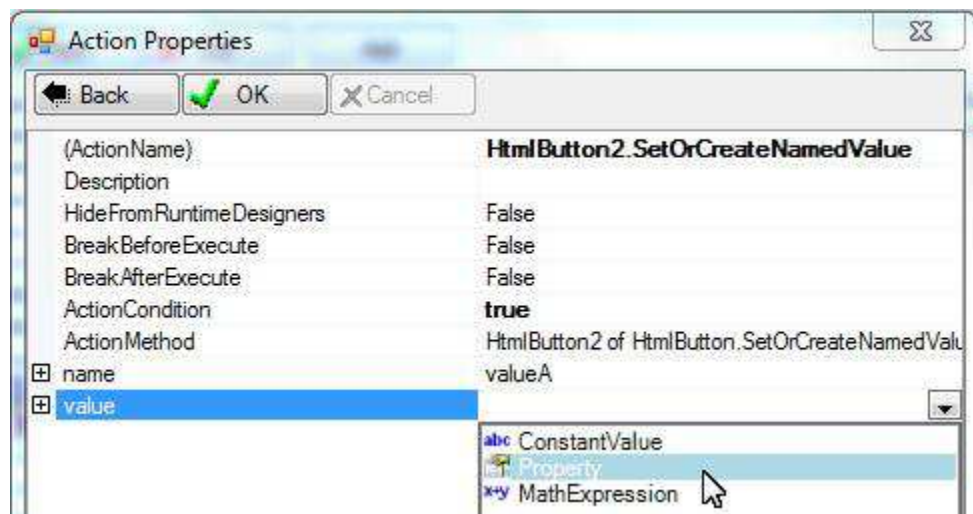


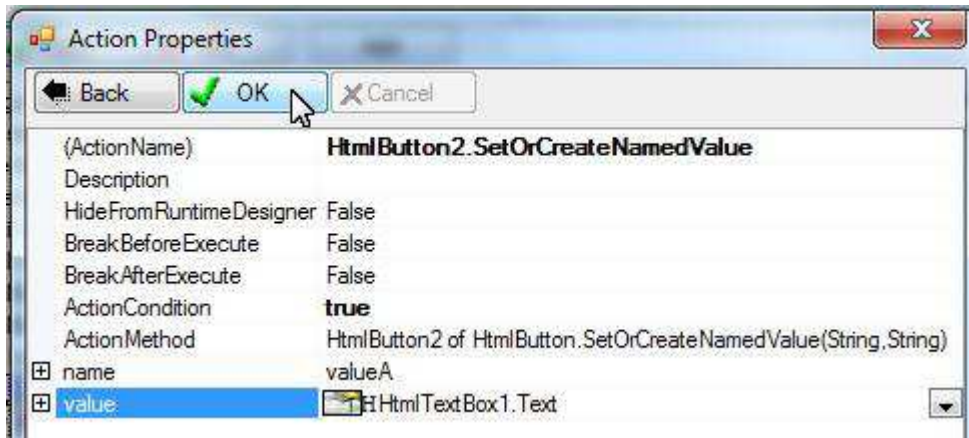


Specify the “name” of the value:

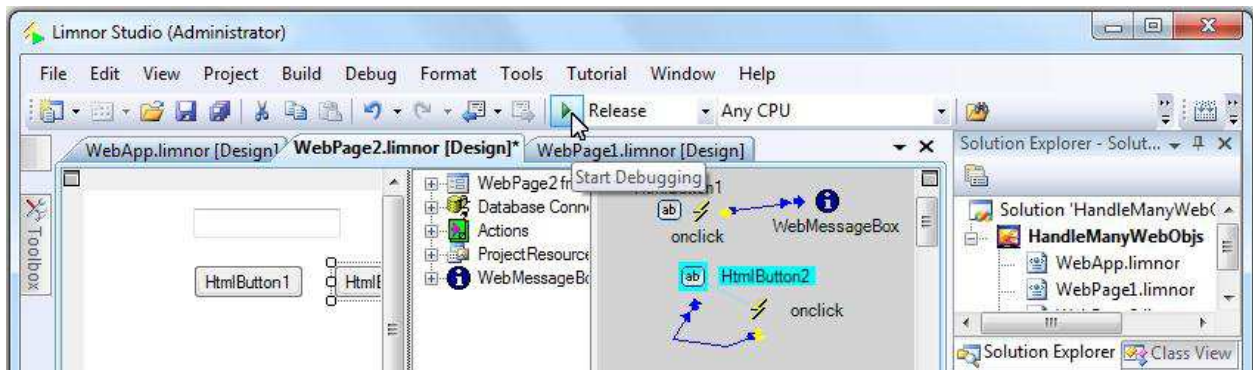


We use the Text property of a text box for the “value” of the action:

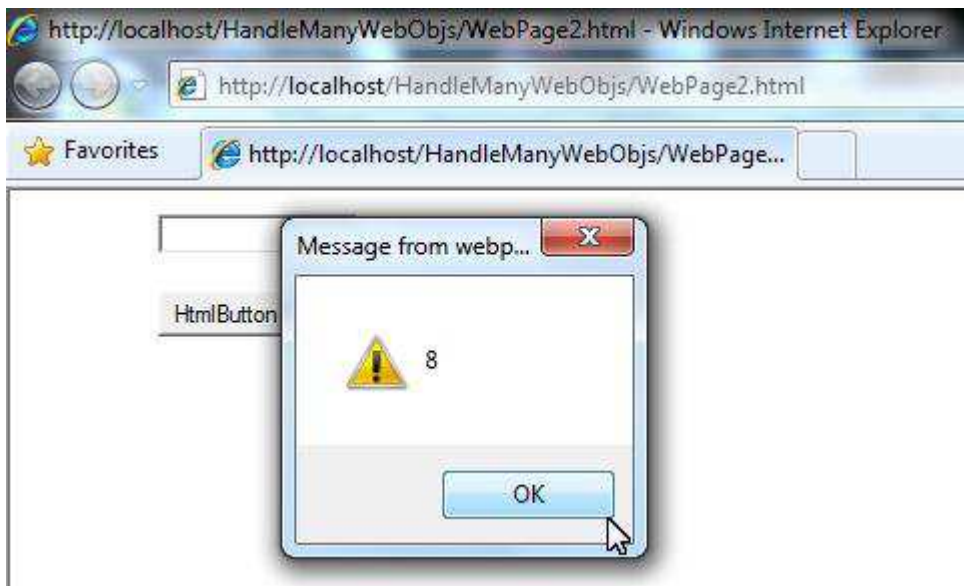




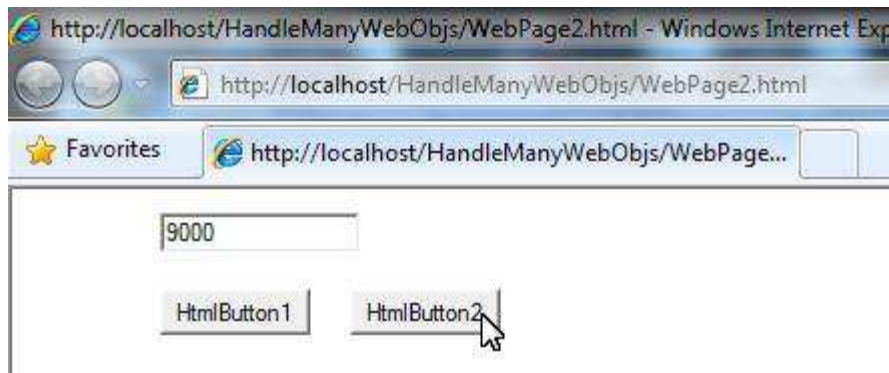
We may test it:



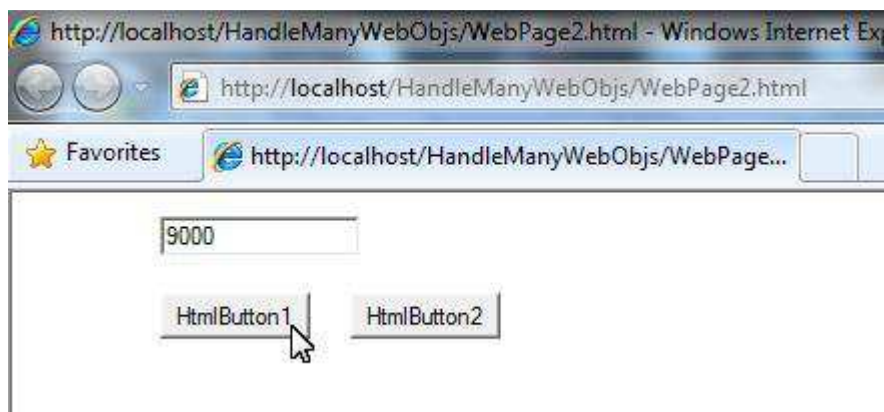
Click button 1, we still see the value set at design time:



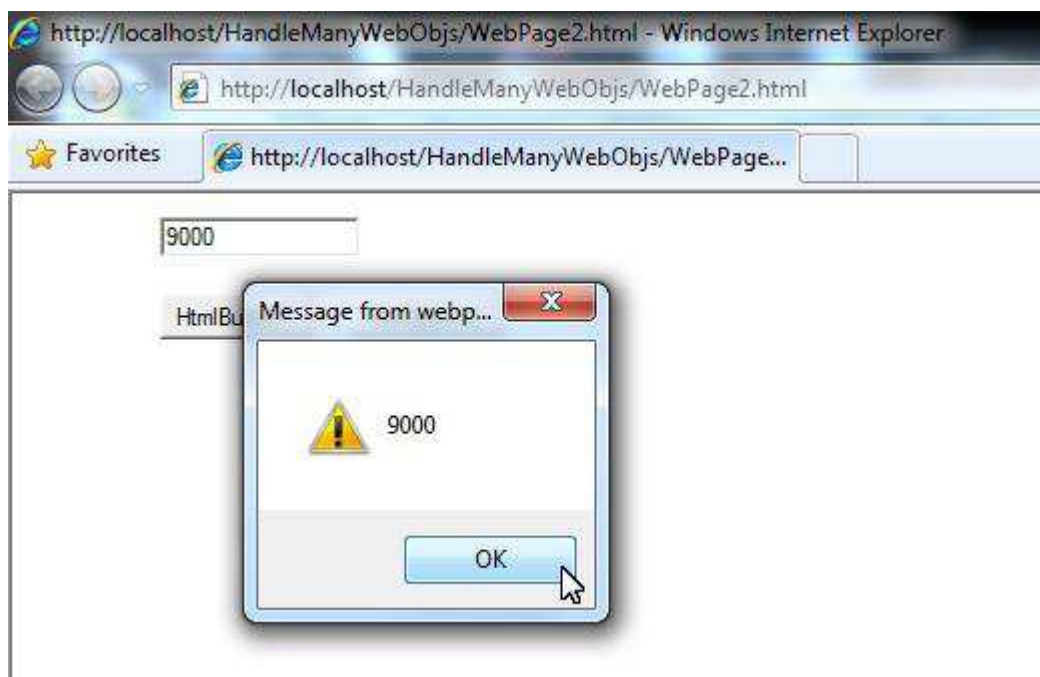
Now we type in some value in the text box and click button 2:



According to our programming, the value should have been passed to the value named "valueA". Let's click button 1 to show it:



As we expected it, the value is changed:



Feedbacks

Please send your feedbacks to support@limnor.com. Thanks!