

# HTML Client Plugin Seed

The fast and easy path to great vSphere Client plugins!

Version 0.9.8

[Feedback welcome!](#)



# Content

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Getting Started with Plugin Seed</b>	<b>5</b>
Generating your first plugin	5
Running your plugin in standalone dev mode	5
Plugin views and dev UI components	6
Deploying your plugin with your local vSphere Client	8
<b>Tech Stack</b>	<b>9</b>
HTML Client SDK 6.5	9
Clarity Design System	9
Angular / Typescript	9
Tools	9
<b>Plugin-seed Overview</b>	<b>10</b>
View Extensions	10
Actions - with modal dialog, wizard or headless	11
Chassis objects	14
Service Calls	16
Data Retrieval	16
Customizing your Plugin	16
<b>Fast Development Cycle</b>	<b>17</b>
Dev Mode	17
Dev mode components	18
View Routing	18
Mock Data	19
Live Data Mode	21
Plugin Mode	24
Differences with Dev Mode	25
Modal Dialogs - local vs. global	27
Fast Development in Plugin Mode	29
Using mock data in plugin mode	29
<b>Testing</b>	<b>31</b>
Debugging	31
Unit Testing with Jasmine	31
Code Coverage	32
End-to-end testing in Dev mode	32
End-to-end testing in Plugin mode	33
<b>Internationalization</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Production Optimizations</b>	<b>35</b>
Build Options	35
AOT and Lazy loading	36
Clarity Component Modularization	37

<b>Tips &amp; Best Practices</b>	<b>37</b>
Online Tips	37
Testing your plugin directly on vCSA	37
Refreshing a view with the latest data	38
Building a plugin without any Java service	39
Integrating http-proxy-servlet to access backend APIs	40
<b>Plugin-seed in Details</b>	<b>42</b>
UI code organization and syntax	42
Source files	43
Removing code that you don't need	46
Removing all Chassis code	46
<b>Summary of the dev mode advantages</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Developing without standalone dev mode</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Known Issues</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>FAQ</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Feedback Welcome!</b>	<b>50</b>

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# Introduction

The HTML Client plugin-seed is the best way to create vSphere Client plugins based on a modern tech stack and robust patterns. It includes a fast development process which will let you expand the initial plugin skeleton into your own version with great productivity.

## Modern tech stack:

- It is based on [HTML SDK 6.5](#), so the generated plugin is compatible with both HTML Client 6.5.x and Flex Client 6.0 or 6.5.
- The UI layer is based on the [Clarity Design System](#), a VMware open-source project.
- It uses the latest [Angular framework](#) and the [Typescript language](#) which have become industry standard for enterprise web applications.
- The generated plugin is an [Angular-CLI](#) project. It comes with utilities and development tools that will speed up your dev cycles, help you follow a good architecture and proper testing.

See the [Tech Stack](#) section below for more details.

## Fast development process:

The traditional way of building a plugin is to treat each view as a separate UI appearing in the corresponding extension point (an object tab, a menu action, a global view). Each UI must be implemented and tested on its own, it is only visible inside the vSphere Client. The development cycle, code -> build -> re-deploy bundle -> refresh Client -> debug, is not very efficient compared to today's state-of-the-art web development.

The new HTML plugin seed lets you treat a plugin as an *integrated single page web application*, regardless of the number of views it needs to embed into the vSphere Client. In *standalone mode* the plugin is an app made of several views that are connected together with routing code and some extra "dev UI". It can be developed entirely outside the vSphere Client, using mock data or real data, and taking advantage of live browser updates.

When the same app is deployed as a plugin its internal *plugin mode* is turned on automatically, which means that each extension point knows to display the correct view. Data is served from production services, i.e. rest calls to backend services. Any extra dev UI is hidden automatically.

By having a clear separation between dev and plugin mode it is a lot easier to take advantage of modern build systems such as Angular-CLI, and to run end-to-end tests outside the vSphere Client. See [Fast Development Cycle](#) below.

In addition to these two modes the generated plugin lets you connect easily to "live data" in dev mode (i.e. use your production services instead of mock data). It also provides a left-hand side navigator for selecting objects. More details below!

**Notes:**

- Developing a plugin as a standalone app is neither a requirement nor an SDK feature, it is only a process to facilitate your development experience. If you are not interested in this hybrid mode approach you can still use [the other patterns](#) and best practices offered by the plugin seed. See [Developing without standalone dev mode](#) at the end for the standard “direct development” approach.

- This document focuses mainly on UI and doesn't cover the development of Java services (refer to the [SDK documentation](#) and SDK samples). See section [Tips & Best Practices](#) for ideas to simplify the plugin's Java layer, either by removing it completely or by using an http-proxy-servlet to call backend APIs.

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## Getting Started with Plugin Seed

We assume in the rest of the document that you are familiar with [HTML Client SDK 6.5](#) and have already installed it on your Windows or Mac development machine. We recommend to use **HTML Client SDK 6.5u1** (version 6.5.0.10000 [5973321]) because the Client is more full featured and includes the Administration tab.

The environment variable `VSPHERE_SDK_HOME` must point to the location of your local Client SDK folder.

### Generating your first plugin

Generate your first plugin with the command line tool (`ANT_HOME` must point to an [Apache Ant](#) folder):

```
./plugin-seed/tools/generate-plugin.[bat, sh]
```

If you use the default name `myplugin` the script will create two directories, `myplugin-ui` and `myplugin-service`, containing the UI component and the Java service component.

### Running your plugin in standalone dev mode

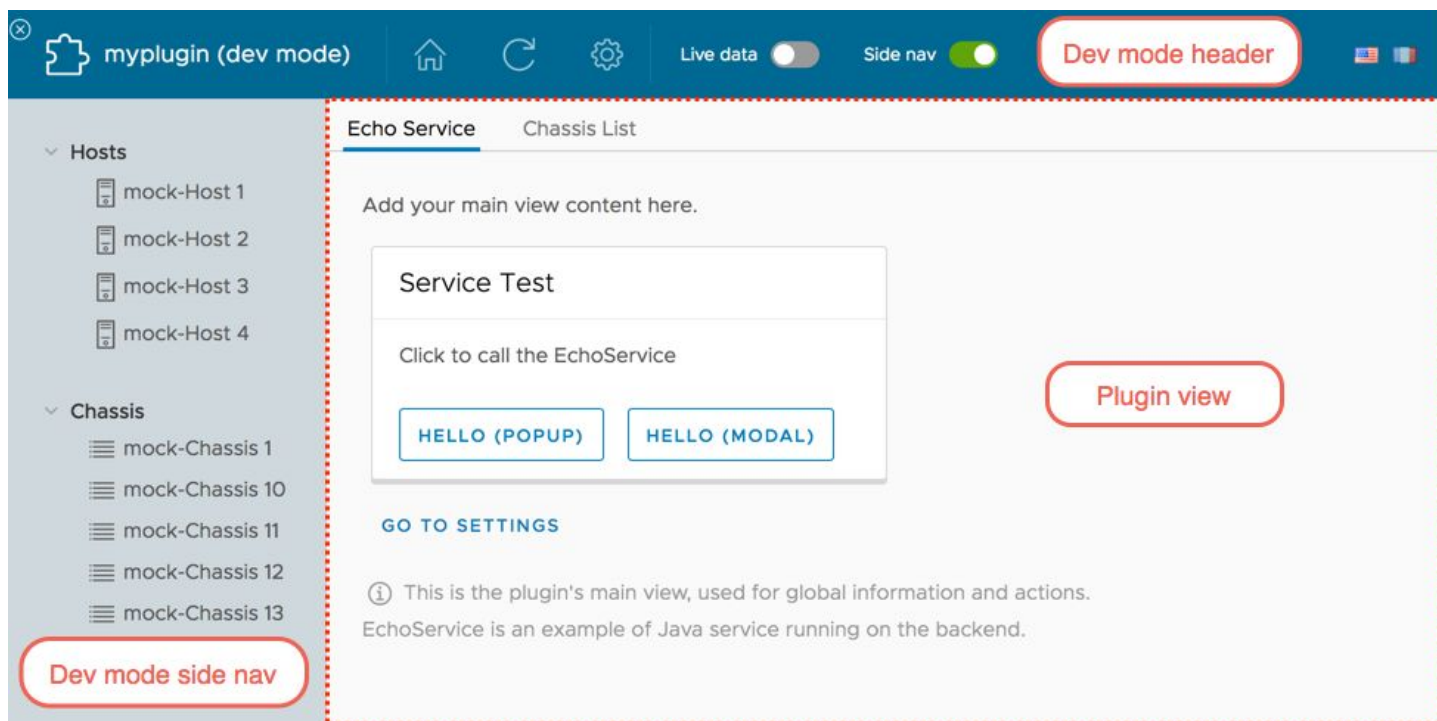
The UI component is the web app that you can instantaneously run in dev mode:

1. As prerequisite you need to install the following tools:
  - o [Node.js](#) version 6.9 or higher
  - o [Angular-CLI](#) (`npm install -g @angular/cli`)
  - o [Json-server](#) (`npm install -g json-server`)
  - o [yarn](#) (yarn is a faster alternative to “npm install” and is optional)
2. `cd myplugin-ui`
3. Install Javascript dependencies by typing:  
`yarn` (or `npm install`)
4. Start json-server in a separate terminal, this is used to serve mock data:  
`npm run json-server`
5. Start the application in standalone dev mode with:  
`npm start`
6. Point your browser to <http://localhost:4201/>

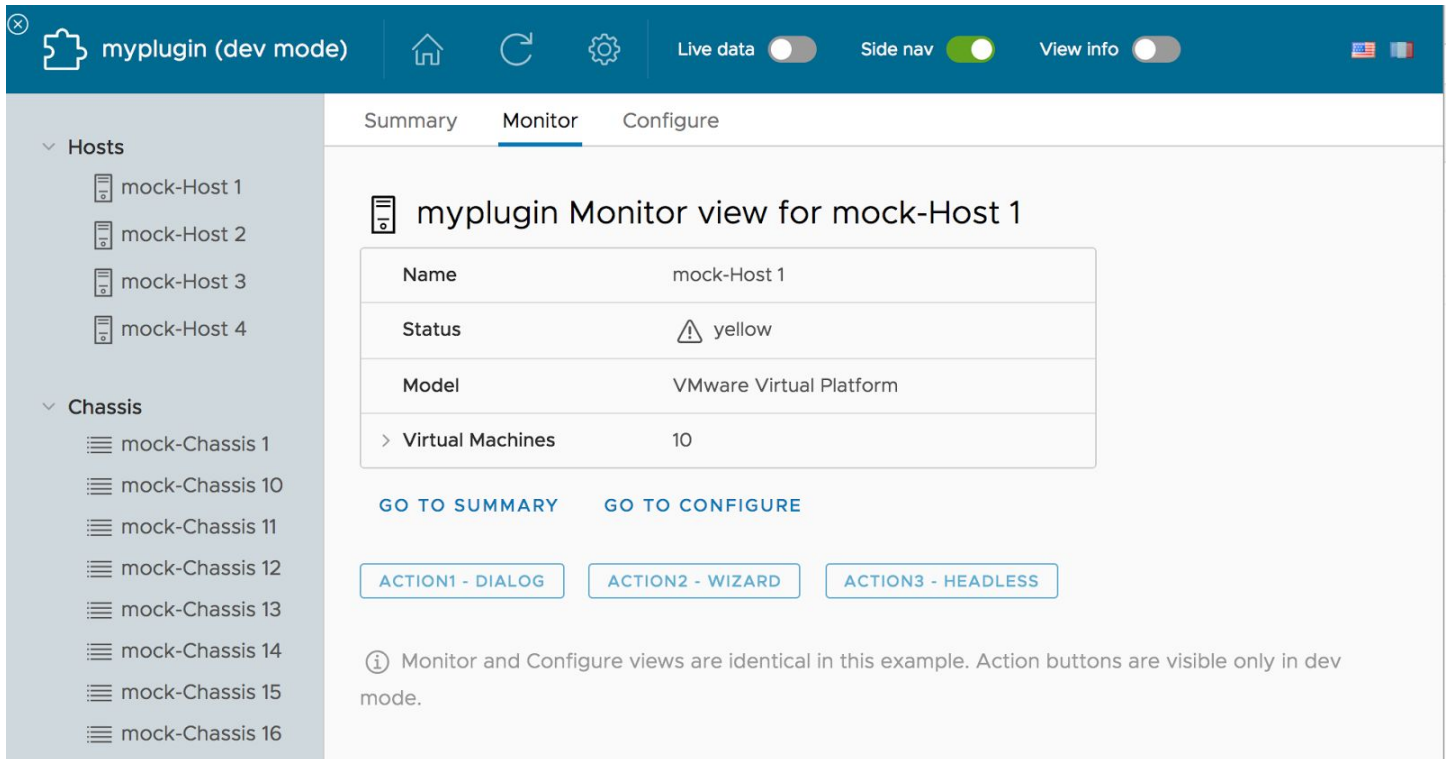
**Note:** if you are already familiar with Angular-CLI you may also use `ng serve` to start the application. This will use default port 4200 instead of 4201. This can be customized in `package.json`.

## Plugin views and dev UI components

The application home page is made of an application header, a navigator on the left and a main view in the center. Only the main view contains the plugin content, the header and navigator are extra *dev UI* components:

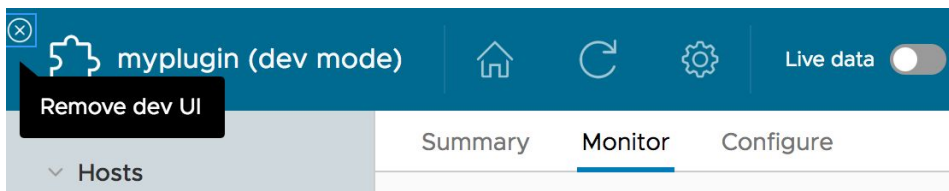


Clicking on a Host navigates to the object's Summary, Monitor and Configure views:

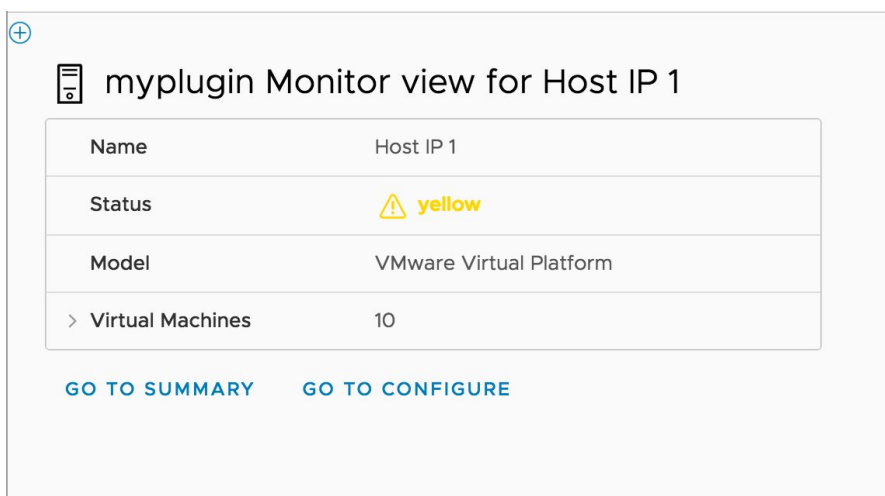


The plugin content is again the central white area, under the header, the tabs, and next to the object navigator (the “dev UI components”). This additional dev UI helps bring everything together into a standalone application for ease of development and testing.

You can hide all dev UI by clicking on the top left (X) icon:



This leaves the monitor view stripped out of the “dev UI”, as it will be displayed inside the vSphere Client:



Click again on (+) to restore the full app.

## Deploying your plugin with your local vSphere Client

To deploy the plugin with vSphere Client you need to build its UI and service bundles, package them into a *plugin package folder* and add this folder to your local vSphere Client setup.

A [plugin package](#) is a .zip archive containing the plugin manifest, `plugin-package.xml`, along with the .war and .jar bundles containing the UI and service code. While working locally you don't need to compress the *plugin package folder* into a .zip archive, you just need to copy it to your local server.

The UI and service bundles can be built individually with scripts in the `/tools` directory. The .jar and .war files are generated in the respective `/target` directories:

```
cd myplugin-service
./tools/build-java.[bat, sh]
```

```
cd myplugin-ui
./tools/build-war.[bat, sh]
```

**Mac OS note:** you may need to make the script files executable first with `chmod +x ./tools/*.sh`

The script `build-plugin-package` builds everything at once and generate the plugin package folder:

```
cd myplugin-ui
./tools/build-plugin-package.[bat, sh]
```

This script also copies the generated folder `myplugin` from `target/` to your local vSphere Client setup, in `$VSPHERE_SDK_HOME/vsphere-ui/plugin-packages`. Afterwards, you need to restart Virgo to use the new package:

```
$VSPHERE_SDK_HOME/vsphere-ui/server/bin/startup.sh -debug
or
%VSPHERE_SDK_HOME%\vsphere-ui\server\bin\startup.bat -debug
```

**Note:** after this first deployment the fastest way to update the plugin UI is to use the `gulp watch` command. It will copy every UI change directly to the correct server location and you will just have to refresh the browser. See [Fast Development in Plugin Mode](#) below for details.



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# Tech Stack

Plugin-seed is based on a state-of-the-art tech stack:

## HTML Client SDK 6.5

SDK 6.5 is the minimum version required to build true HTML plugins that can work both in vSphere Web Client 6.0 or 6.5 (Flex) and vSphere HTML Client 6.5 and above.

Plugin-seed doesn't add any SDK API, it uses the SDK as is and offers utilities that are not part of the SDK.

We recommend to use the more recent Fling SDK available on the [HTML Client Fling page](#). The advantage is that you will be installing the latest version of the HTML Client for local development, while retaining compatibility with 6.0 and 6.5.

## Clarity Design System

The [Clarity Design System](#) is a VMware open-source project. It consists of UX guidelines, HTML/CSS framework, and Angular components working together to build great web applications.

Plugin-seed is based on Clarity first because it is becoming quickly a leading UI framework, and second because it will make your plugin UI de-facto consistent with vSphere HTML Client which uses Clarity too!

Clarity is evolving rapidly both inside VMware and throughout the open source community. It is already feature-rich and you can expect more to come on a regular basis.

## Angular / Typescript

[Angular framework](#) and the [Typescript language](#) have become industry standard for web applications. The other main reason for picking Angular is to be able to take full advantage of the Clarity components library (instead of being restricted to the Clarity UI styles if we were using another JS framework).

Typescript is not a requirement per se, but Angular and Typescript go very well together. Typescript is easy to learn, most of the Angular documentation uses examples in Typescript. Whether or not you already know Javascript, Typescript is the right place to start from, for cleaner code and better productivity.

**Note:** *Angular* alone means all versions at or above version 2.

## Tools

The UI build system is using [Angular-CLI](#) which is also becoming a standard tool for building Angular application.

Testing is following [Angular's best practices](#) using the [Jasmine test framework](#) for unit testing and [Protractor](#) for end-to-end tests.

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## Plugin-seed Overview

Plugin-seed creates a plugin scaffolding to kickstart a new plugin project. It includes many SDK extensions points and features that you can choose to keep or not. It also contains utilities that are not part of the SDK per se and provides different options that can be customized.

## View Extensions

The plugin contains the 3 types of views that can extend the vSphere Client UI:

- *Global view*, one that is not attached to a particular object context in the left navigator
- *Object view*, included into a specific object workspace (Summary, Monitor, Configure)
- *Modal view*, used in response to actions, such as wizards, one-page dialogs, etc.

The **Home** and **Settings** view are global views, they both use extension point `vise.global.views` in `plugin.xml`:

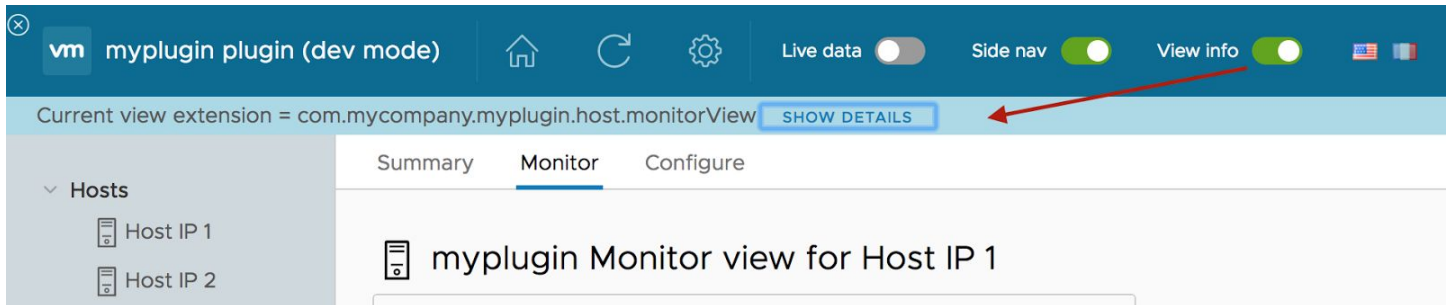
```
<extension id="com.mycompany.myplugin.mainView">
  <extendedPoint>vise.global.views</extendedPoint>
  <object>
    <name>#{app.name}</name>
    <componentClass className="com.vmware.vsphere.client.htmlbridge.HtmlView">
      <object>
        <root>
          <url>/vsphere-client/myplugin/index.html?view=main</url>
        </root>
      </object>
    </componentClass>
  </object>
</extension>
```

The Host object views are accessed through a host context. Here is the extension definition for **Monitor**:

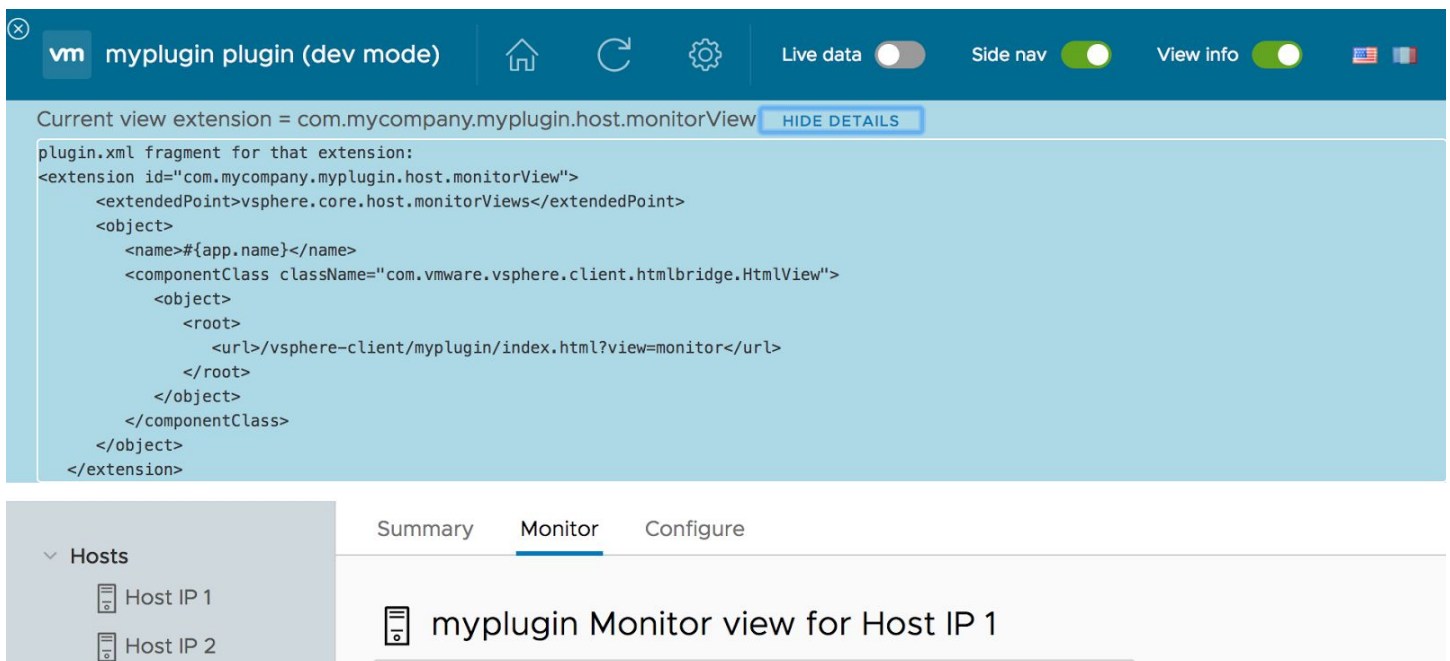
```
<extension id="com.mycompany.myplugin.host.monitor">
  <extendedPoint>vsphere.core.host.monitorViews</extendedPoint>
  <object>
    <name>#{monitorTab.label}</name>
    <componentClass className="com.vmware.vsphere.client.htmlbridge.HtmlView">
      <object>
        <root>
          <url>/vsphere-client/myplugin/index.html?view=monitor</url>
        </root>
      </object>
    </componentClass>
  </object>
</extension>
```

Navigation between the different views is handled transparently through the `app-routing` component. See [View Routing](#) below for more details.

The app header includes a *View info* switch to display additional information on the current view extension.




The details mode displays the xml fragment from `src/webapp/plugin.xml` for that particular extension, to be able to match the view with its extension definition.



## Actions - with modal dialog, wizard or headless

The generated plugin comes with three sample actions on Hosts, see `sampleAction1, 2, 3` in `plugin.xml`. In dev mode it is easier to use buttons to implement and test these actions, they will be hidden in plugin mode.

## myplugin Monitor view for Host IP 1

Name	Host IP 1
Status	 <b>yellow</b>
Model	VMware Virtual Platform
> Virtual Machines	10

[GO TO SUMMARY](#)[GO TO CONFIGURE](#)[ACTION1 - DIALOG](#)[ACTION2 - WIZARD](#)[ACTION3 - HEADLESS](#)

The *Action1 - dialog* button opens a single page modal dialog where one can fill in parameters that will be sent along. This is the general case of actions that need user input.

Action1 for Host Host IP 1

Form parameters sent as action arguments:

Parameter 1 \*

Parameter 2

some default value

Parameter 3

Type A

CANCEL

OK

The corresponding extension definition in `plugin.xml` is the following:

```
<com.vmware.actionsfw.ActionSpec>
  <uid>myplugin.sampleAction1</uid>
  <label>#{sampleAction1.name}</label>
  <icon>#{addIcon}</icon>
  <delegate>
    <className>com.vmware.vsphere.client.htmlbridge.HtmlActionDelegate</className>
    <object><root>
      <!-- execute action1 on client-side, i.e. opens a modal dialog -->
      <actionUrl>/vsphere-client/myplugin/index.html?view=action1-modal</actionUrl>
      <dialogTitle>#{sampleAction1.name}</dialogTitle>
      <dialogSize>576,260</dialogSize>
    </root></object>
  </delegate>
</com.vmware.actionsfw.ActionSpec>
```

Note that `<dialogSize>576,260</dialogSize>` must adjusted to match the standard Clarity dialog sizes.

The *Action2 - wizard* button opens a multi-page wizard:

Action2 wizard

Step 1 title

Form parameters sent as action arguments:

Parameter 1 \* !

Parameter 2 some default value

Parameter 3 Type A ▼

CANCEL NEXT

The corresponding extension definition in `plugin.xml` is the following:

```
<com.vmware.actionsfw.ActionSpec>
  <uid>myplugin.sampleAction2</uid>
  <label>#{sampleAction2.name}</label>
  <icon>#{editIcon}</icon>
  <delegate>
    <className>com.vmware.vsphere.client.htmlbridge.HtmlActionDelegate</className>
    <object><root>
      <!-- execute action2 on client-side, i.e. opens a modal wizard -->
      <actionUrl>/vsphere-client/myplugin/index.html?view=action2-wizard</actionUrl>
      <dialogTitle>#{sampleAction2.name}</dialogTitle>
      <dialogSize>861,580</dialogSize>
    </root></object>
  </delegate>
</com.vmware.actionsfw.ActionSpec>
```

Here also `<dialogSize>861,580</dialogSize>` must adjusted to match the standard Clarity wizard sizes.

Finally the *Action3 - headless* button is the less frequent type, it calls the backend directly hence the name “headless”.

The corresponding extension definition in `plugin.xml` is the following:

```
<com.vmware.actionsfw.ActionSpec>
  <uid>myplugin.sampleAction3</uid>
  <label>#{sampleAction3.name}</label>
  <delegate>
    <className>com.vmware.vsphere.client.htmlbridge.HtmlActionDelegate</className>
    <object><root>
      <!-- action3 is headless, it calls the ActionController endpoint -->
      <actionUrl>/vsphere-client/myplugin/rest/actions.html</actionUrl>
    </root></object>
  </delegate>
</com.vmware.actionsfw.ActionSpec>
```

See the [SDK documentation](#) for more information on handling action results and errors.

## Chassis objects

Chassis components are included in plugin-seed to demonstrate the use of “custom objects”. You can follow the same model for object types you would like to be display in the left inventory. Or you can [remove the chassis-related code](#) to simplify your plugin.

The backend service is a simpler version of the SDK’s chassisB sample as there is no Rack object type and no relationship between objects. See source files in `myplugin-service/.../services/`.

The front-end consists of a *Chassis List* global view and a summary view for each Chassis object. The Chassis list in the main view uses several of the [Clarity datagrid](#) features: pagination, column sorting and filtering, action menu for each row (see first screenshot below). Note that this plugin-specific list is different from the objects list provided internally by the vSphere Client (see second screenshot below). In the latter case the plugin is only responsible for providing data through its java services.

## myplugin Main View

Echo Service

Chassis List



### ADD A CHASSIS

- Use left menu on each row to edit or delete a chassis

	Name	Dimensions	Server type
⋮	Chassis 18	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 2
⋮	Chassis 19	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 0
⋮	Chassis 2	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 1
⋮	Chassis 3	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 1
⋮	Chassis 4	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 2
⋮	Chassis 5	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 0
⋮	Chassis 6	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 1
⋮	Chassis 7	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 2
⋮	Chassis 8	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 0
⋮	Chassis 9	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 1

11 - 20 of 21 chassis    < 1 2 3 >

vm vSphere Client

Menu

Search

Administrator@VSPHERE.LOCAL

Help

Chassis 20

Chassis 1

Chassis 10

Chassis 11

Chassis 12

Chassis 13

Chassis 14

Chassis 15

Chassis 16

Chassis 17

Chassis 18

Chassis 19

Chassis 2

Chassis 20

Chassis 3

Chassis 4

### Chassis

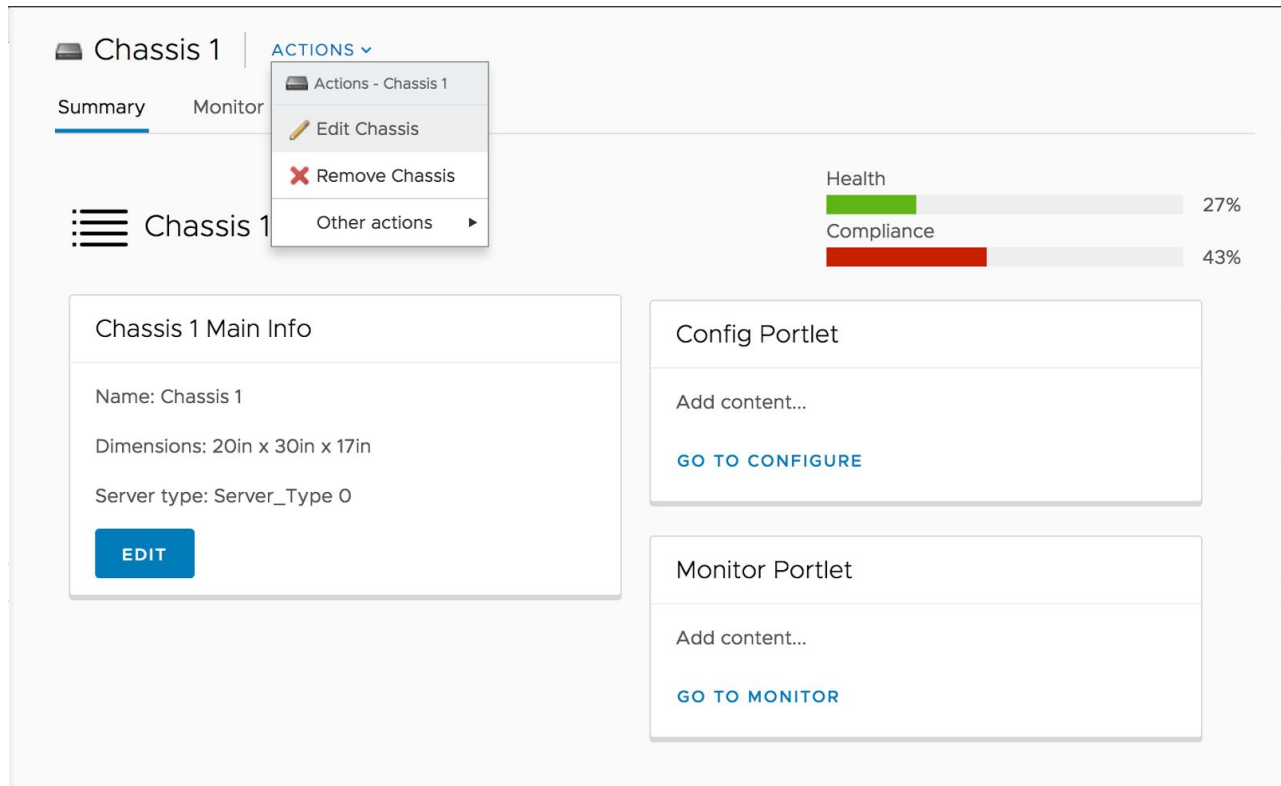
+ Add a Chassis

Filter

name	dimensions	serverType
Chassis 10	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 0
Chassis 11	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 1
Chassis 12	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 2
Chassis 13	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 0
Chassis 14	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 1
Chassis 15	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 2
Chassis 16	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 0
Chassis 17	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 1
Chassis 18	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 2
Chassis 19	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 0
Chassis 2	20in x 30in x 17in	Server_Type 1

20 items

The Chassis workspace comes with default tabs *Summary*, *Monitor*, *Configure*, because it uses `vsphere.core.inventory.objectViewTemplate` in `plugin.xml`. The actions menu display actions defined in `plugin.xml` as well.



## Service Calls

An example of service call is done in the Main view, using the `EchoService`. You can use the same pattern to send POST requests. See the generated `EchoService.java` in `myplugin-service`.

## Data Retrieval

The hosts list in the side navigator and the host Monitor view show how to retrieve data from your Java layer through standard rest calls. Note that the code in `host.service.ts` is very generic, it handles the case of mock data or live data.

Similarly the `ChassisService` in `chassis.service.ts` deals with chassis mock data or live data.

## Customizing your Plugin

Once you have generated your first plugin you can customize it in multiple ways:

- Remove patterns and utilities that you are not interested in
- Use [Angular-CLI commands](#) to generate new components and services
- Carve out code and features and insert them in another project



---

# Fast Development Cycle

In addition to the features described in [Plugin-seed Overview](#) your generated plugin contains the code necessary for fast development cycles. It offers a multimode development approach:

1. A [dev mode](#), where you will spend most of your time to focus on UI.
2. A [live data mode](#), within the dev mode, which allows to connect to your production data services
3. A [plugin mode](#) (or production mode), where you run and test your app in the vSphere Client.

## Dev Mode

“Dev mode” means building and running the plugin UI as a standalone web application, without involving the vSphere Client. Dev mode is the default since it is the easiest.

There are many advantages of that approach:

- You focus on UI components and treat all views as a single page app without being encumbered with the vSphere Client environment.
- The development cycle is really fast: build quickly, prototype quickly, test quickly, and quickly fix any errors along the way!
- You can use mock data easily to separate UI development and testing from backend services.
- Debugging is integrated
- End-to-end testing is simpler than doing everything within the vSphere Client.
- You may convert your plugin into another app later if necessary.

Start the plugin UI as an Angular application with:

```
npm start
```

You should see a webpack trace like this after a few seconds, unless there is a compilation error (note: webpack is included in Angular-CLI):

```
chunk    {0} main.bundle.js, main.bundle.map (main) 98 kB {3} [initial] [rendered]
chunk    {1} scripts.bundle.js, scripts.bundle.map (scripts) 263 kB {4} [initial]
chunk    {2} styles.bundle.js, styles.bundle.map (styles) 785 kB {4} [initial]
chunk    {3} vendor.bundle.js, vendor.bundle.map (vendor) 3.79 MB [initial]
chunk    {4} inline.bundle.js, inline.bundle.map (inline) 0 bytes [entry]
webpack: bundle is now VALID.
```

Open the browser of your choice at <http://localhost:4201/> to see the app running. If you forgot to start the *json-server* that provides [mock data](#) you will be reminded with an error message.

The `npm start` script is defined in `package.json` as:

```
ng serve --port 4201 --proxy-config proxy.conf.json
```

- You can change the default port to the value of your choice.  
(Note that the same port is used in `app/shared/dev/webPlatformStub.ts`)
- The Angular-CLI proxy configuration allows to avoid CORS issues when using the [Live Data mode](#).

`ng serve` is the standard way to generate and serve an Angular2 project via a development server. It also provides **live reload**, i.e the app automatically reloads if you change any of the source files! This is the best way to try things out quickly as you make changes.

While making changes you should also keep another terminal window open with unit tests running at all times. This way, in addition to the live reload which shows the effect of your change in the browser, you can verify that tests are passing at all times.

Start tests like this on the command line: `ng test`. See the [Testing](#) section below for more details.

## Dev mode components

Plugin-seed provides the utilities and components that makes dev mode possible: the `app-header`, `sidenav` and `subnav` components are the most visible ones as shown in the [screenshots above](#).

Each plugin view's html template includes the `app-header` component with one line at the top like this:

```
<!-- Dev mode header -->
<app-header *ngIf="gs.showDevUI()" ></app-header>
```

This header is hidden automatically in plugin mode by using API `showDevUI()` in `GlobalsService`.

`AppHeader` comes with default features and you can customize it for your own needs. Having such extra code used only in dev mode is negligible.

Search for `showDevUI()` in the `src/` directory to see all instances where

## View Routing

Since the dev mode shows an integrated app we must have code to handle the navigation between different views. This is done transparently through the `app-routing` component.

For instance clicking on the Settings icon in the header triggers this code in `app-headers.component.ts` which changes the view to Settings:

```
this.router.navigate(["/settings"]);
```

When the plugin runs in the vSphere Client the same Settings view is accessed through the Client UI, in this case by clicking in *Administration > MyPlugin > Settings* in the left navigator. This is done through the following extension in `plugin.xml`:

```
<extension id="com.mycompany.myplugin.adminSettings">
  <extendedPoint>wise.navigator.nodespecs</extendedPoint>
  <object>
    <title>#{settings}</title>
    <parentUid>com.mycompany.myplugin.adminCategory</parentUid>
    <navigationTargetUid>com.mycompany.myplugin.settingsView</navigationTargetUid>
  </object>
</extension>
```

See below the routes defined in `app-routing.module.ts`

```
export const ROUTES: Routes = [
  // Route for plugin mode
  { path: "index.html", component: AppRoutingComponent },

  // Routes for dev mode and internal routing
  { path: "", redirectTo: "/main", pathMatch: "full" },
  { path: "main", component: MainComponent },
  { path: "settings", component: SettingsComponent },
  { path: "monitor/:id", component: MonitorComponent },
  { path: "host-action1/:id", component: HostActionComponent },
  { path: "echo-modal/:id", component: EchoModalComponent },
];
```

The 2nd one means that `http://localhost:4201/` without any path is redirected to the home page at <http://localhost:4201/main>. The top one means that a path starting with `index.html` will use the `AppRoutingComponent` to display the correct view, this is the case for URLs used in `plugin.xml`. For instance the URL for the Settings view extension is:

```
<url>/vsphere-client/myplugin/index.html?view=settings</url>
```

In this case the `ngOnInit` function in `app-routing.component.ts` extracts the `view` parameter and uses the router to navigate to the proper component while the app is initialized in the plugin `iFrame`. The other parameters passed to the view url (`objectId`, `locale`, `actionUId`, `targets`) are processed accordingly.

## Mock Data

Separating UI development from backend data services by using mock data is a common practice that will also speed up your development process. This plugin-seed uses [json-server](#) as a *quick backend for prototyping and mocking*. Other mocking solutions are available but `json-server` is very simple to setup and supports REST APIs.

Start the `json-server` if it's not already running:

```
json-server --watch db.json --static ./src/webapp
(or npm run json-server)
```

The part `--static ./src/webapp` is not needed for mock data but necessary for the [view info](#) feature and [i18n support](#) in dev mode.

The file `db.json` contains the following mock data:

```
{
  "echos": [
    {
      "id": 1
    }
  ],
  "hosts": [
    {
```

```

    "id": 1,
    "name": "Host IP 1",
    "status": "yellow",
    "model": "VMware Virtual Platform",
    "vms" : ["vm-10", "vm-11", "vm-12"]
  },
  {
    "id": 2,
    "name": "Host IP 2",
    "status": "green",
    "model": "VMware Virtual Platform",
    "vms" : ["vm-20", "vm-21", "vm-22"]
  }
]
}

```

The **echos** entry allows to answer to EchoService POST request <http://localhost:3000/echos> in `echo.service.ts`.

The **hosts** entry allows to get a list of hosts, or individual host properties, with GET requests at `http://localhost:3000/hosts` and <http://localhost:3000/hosts/<objectId>> in `host.service.ts`.

Here is a code snippet from `HostService` for getting the list of hosts in dev mode:

```

private getHostsUrl(): string {
  let url: string;
  if (this.gs.useLiveData()) {
    // Use plugin's REST endpoint to get list of object names with type HostSystem
    url = this.gs.getWebContextPath() + "/rest/data/list/?"
      + "targetType=" + hostType + "&properties=name";
  } else {
    // Mock data => use json-server hosts API, see file db.json
    url = "http://localhost:3000/hosts";
  }
  return url;
}

getHosts(): Observable<HostList> {
  const headers = this.gs.getHttpHeaders();
  const useLiveData = this.gs.useLiveData();
  return this.http.get(this.getHostsUrl(), headers)
    .map(response => {
      const hosts = (useLiveData ? response.json().data : response.json()) as Host[];
      return new HostList(hosts);
    })
    .catch(error =>
      Observable.of(new HostList([], this.errorHandler.getHttpError(error))));
}

```

It converts the json response into an array of Host objects. Type Host is defined in `host.model.ts`

```
// A simple Host object model
export class Host {
  id: string;
  /** Host name */
  name: string;
  /** Host overallStatus: green, yellow, red */
  status: string;
  /** Type of host, from property "hardware.systemInfo.model" */
  model: string;
  /** List of vm ids */
  vms: Array<string> = [];
  ...
}
```

## Live Data Mode

Mock data is nice to start prototyping fast but at some point you also want to test with real data coming from backend services running in your local Virgo setup. This is the case if the plugin UI runs in vSphere Client, however the “best of both worlds” would be to connect to real vSphere data while still in dev mode. Plugin-seed provides a simple mechanism to achieve that!

The header button *Use Live Data* turns on and off a `GlobalsService` variable. Each service can then switch between mock data and live data at the lowest level, so that it remains transparent to callers of that service.

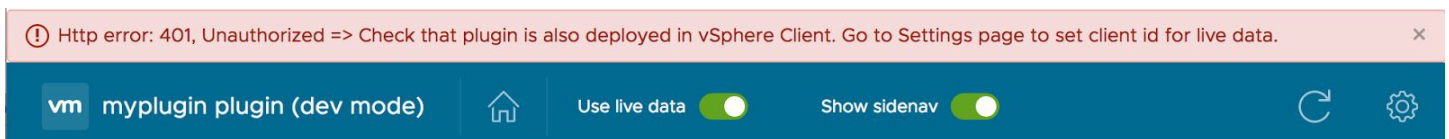
For instance, looking at the code snippet above for `getHostsUrl()` here is how the `HostService` implements the “Live Data” mode:

In dev mode `gs.getWebContextPath()` becomes `http://localhost:4201/ui/myplugin`, and because the app was started with the Angular-CLI proxy-config option (`--proxy-config proxy.conf.json`) all requests going to the `/ui` end-point are proxied to the local Virgo runtime at <https://localhost:9443>. See the configuration in `proxy.conf.json`:

```
{
  "/ui": {
    "target": "https://localhost:9443",
    "secure": false
  }
}
```

Without such proxy configuration the standalone app at `http://localhost:4201` would not be able to send requests to `https://localhost:9443` without a [CORS error](#).

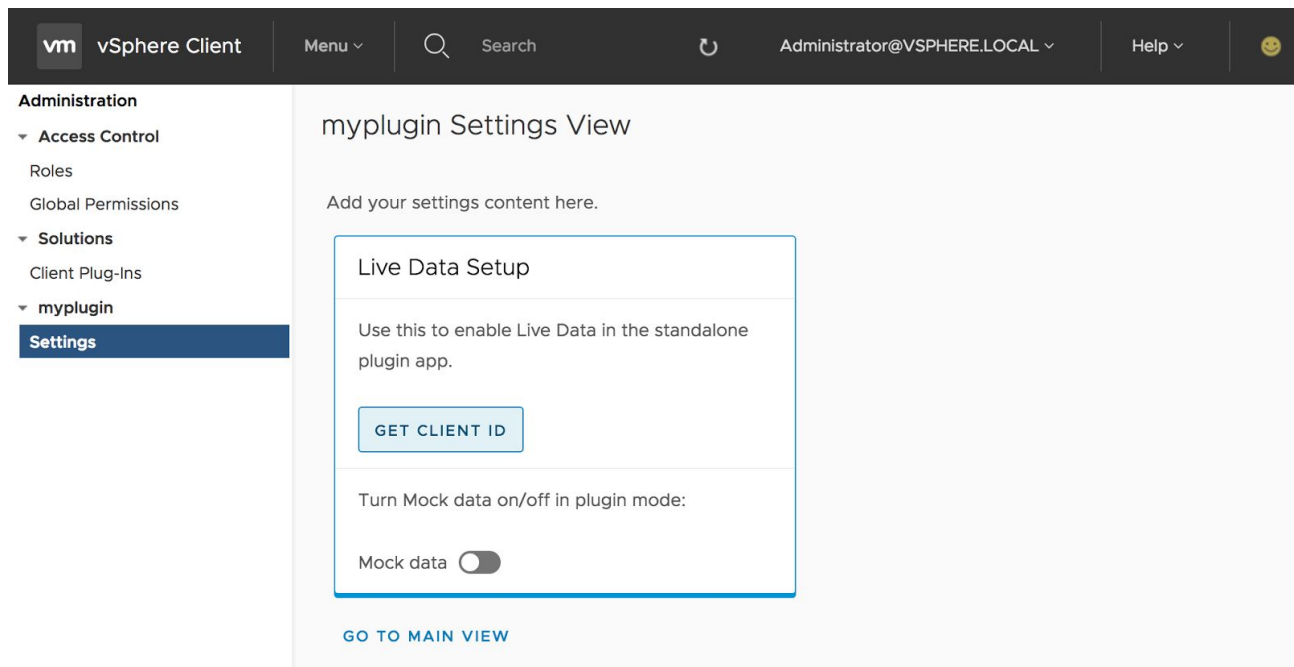
However this is not enough, as you can see when toggling the live data button... The request goes to the correct server but it is not authenticated yet:



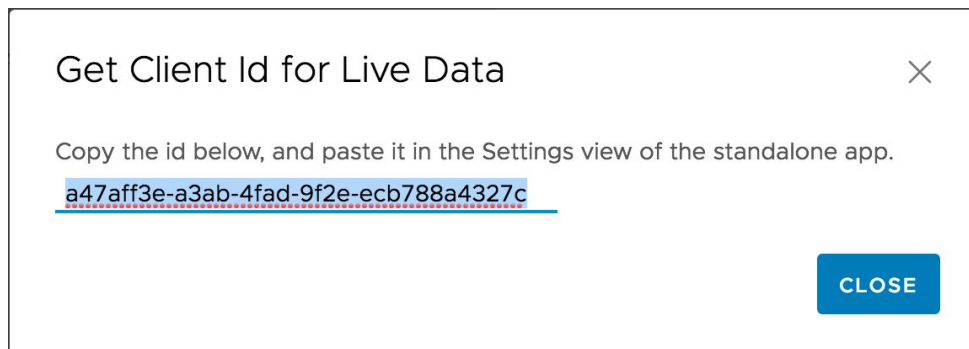
Does every request requires authentication? It depends on your service REST endpoint. The error above occurs when the side navigator is opened because the HostService tries to get the list of hosts in your local vSphere setup. And accessing vSphere data requires authentication. But if you go to the Home page and click *Hello (Modal)* you will see the echo request return from your backend without error.

The way to make Live Data mode work with vSphere data is to inject a valid user session id in the standalone app. This step cannot be automated easily, but you should not have to do it more than once a day as long as you keep the session valid.

1. First you need to have your local vSphere HTML Client running (not the vSphere Flex Client)  
**Important:** This requires SDK 6.5u1 or a [HTML Client SDK Fling](#) because the Administration tab wasn't implemented yet in the HTML Client that comes with SDK 6.5 GA!
2. You also need to deploy the plugin in vSphere Client as described in the next section [Plugin Mode](#).
3. Then go to *Administration > myplugin > Settings* view and click *Get Client Id*

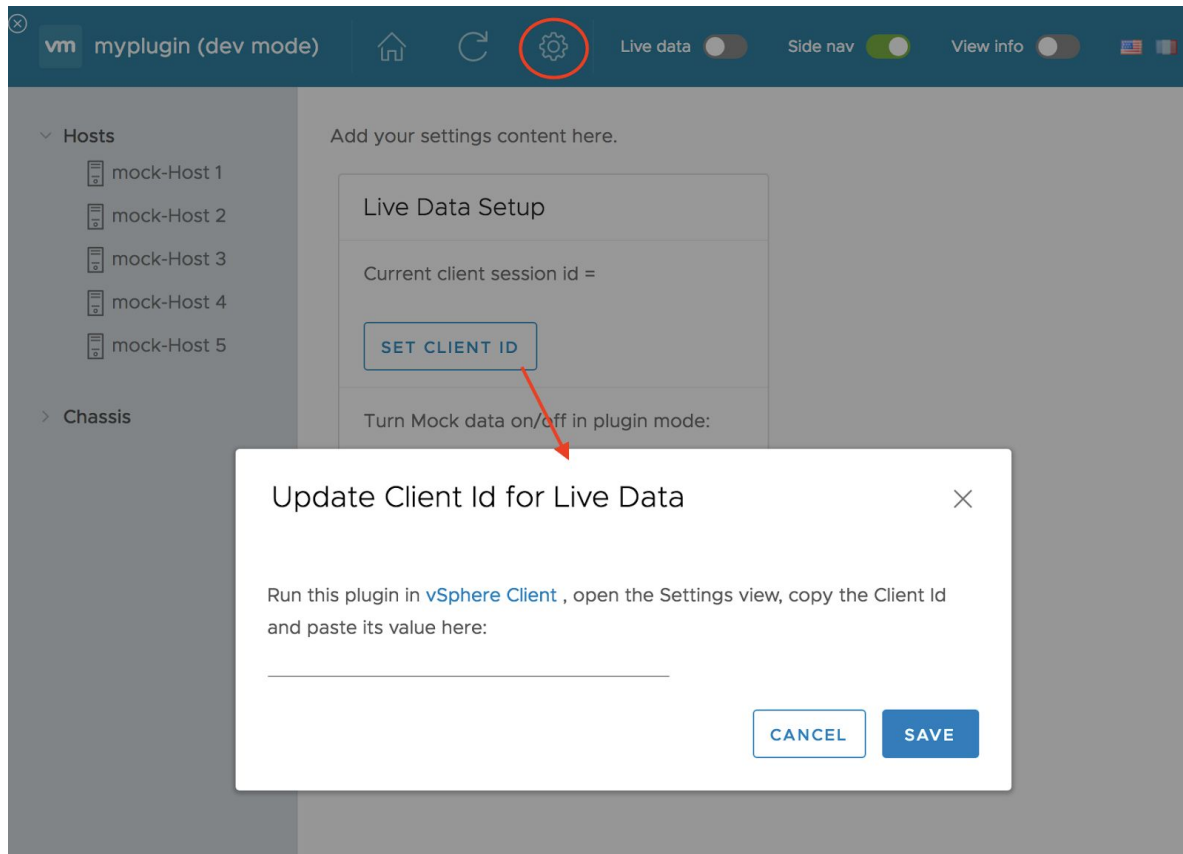


4. Copy the client id value from the text box

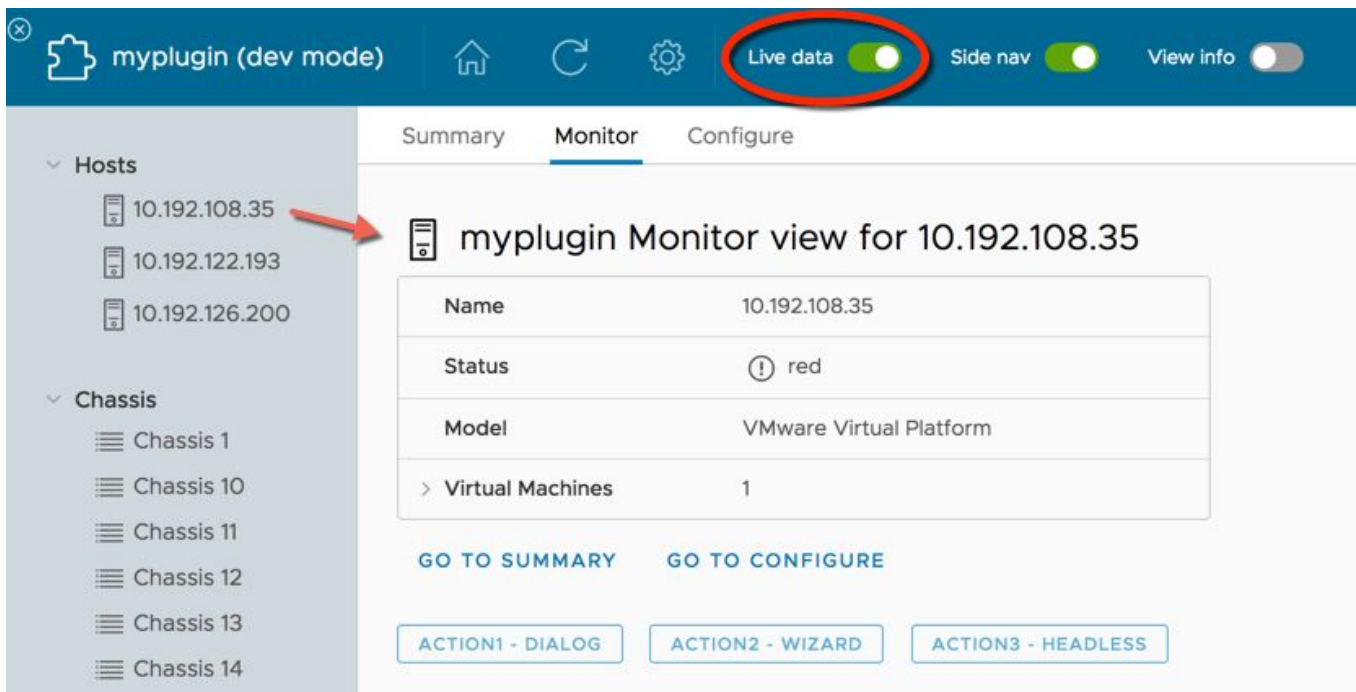


5. Go back to the browser window where the plugin is running in dev mode

6. Open the Settings view and click on *Set Client Id*, then paste the value.



7. Switch the Live Data button again, you should see the Hosts from your inventory



From that point on you can go back and forth, using Live Data or not. The client id is added to http requests automatically (see `getLiveDataHeaders` in `GlobalsService`) so the Virgo server treats them as authenticated requests as long as the session is valid.

**Note:** the Live Data mode value is saved in your browser cookie, so that you always go back to the same mode when the application is refreshed (see the `GlobalsService` constructor).

## Plugin Mode

At any moment you can run the same code in “Plugin Mode”: Plugin mode means deploying and testing your plugin UI in vSphere Client. The same application is running inside each plugin view. Instead of being one integrated app, your plugin views are accessible in each “extension” that you have declared in `plugin.xml`.

For instance:

- One global view extension as the main view.
- One global view extension as the settings view, in the client’s Administration area.
- One object view extension as the Monitor sub-tab for Hosts.
- One modal dialog for a menu action extension.

The runtime switch `pluginMode` is initialized to true because each plugin view runs inside an iFrame. See this line in `globals.service.ts`:

```
this.pluginMode = (window.self !== window.parent);
```

[Dev mode components](#) such as the application header are hidden automatically, so that users only see the “production UI”. The [view routing](#) handles each extension URL to display the proper view component for each extension, such as `<url>/vsphere-client/myplugin/index.html?view=main</url>`.

The process of building the plugin package and deploying it with your local vSphere Client setup is the same as in the SDK documentation for any plugin. Follow the steps [Deploying your plugin with vSphere Client](#) above.



The screenshot shows the vSphere Client interface. The top bar includes the VMware logo, 'vSphere Client', a 'Menu' dropdown, a search bar, a refresh icon, and 'Total time(s): 1.51'. The left sidebar contains navigation links: Home, Shortcuts, Hosts and Clusters, VMs and Templates, Storage, Networking, Content Libraries, Global Inventory Lists, Policies and Profiles, Global App (HTML), Administration, Tasks, and Events. The main content area is titled 'myplugin Main View' and contains two tabs: 'Echo Service' (selected) and 'Chassis List'. Below the tabs, there is a placeholder text 'Add your main view content here.' and a 'Service Test' section. The 'Service Test' section includes a button 'Click to call the EchoService' and two buttons: 'HELLO (POPUP)' and 'HELLO (MODAL)'. Below these buttons is a link 'GO TO SETTINGS'. A red dashed box highlights the main content area, and a red rounded rectangle at the bottom right contains the text 'Plugin global view'.

## Differences with Dev Mode

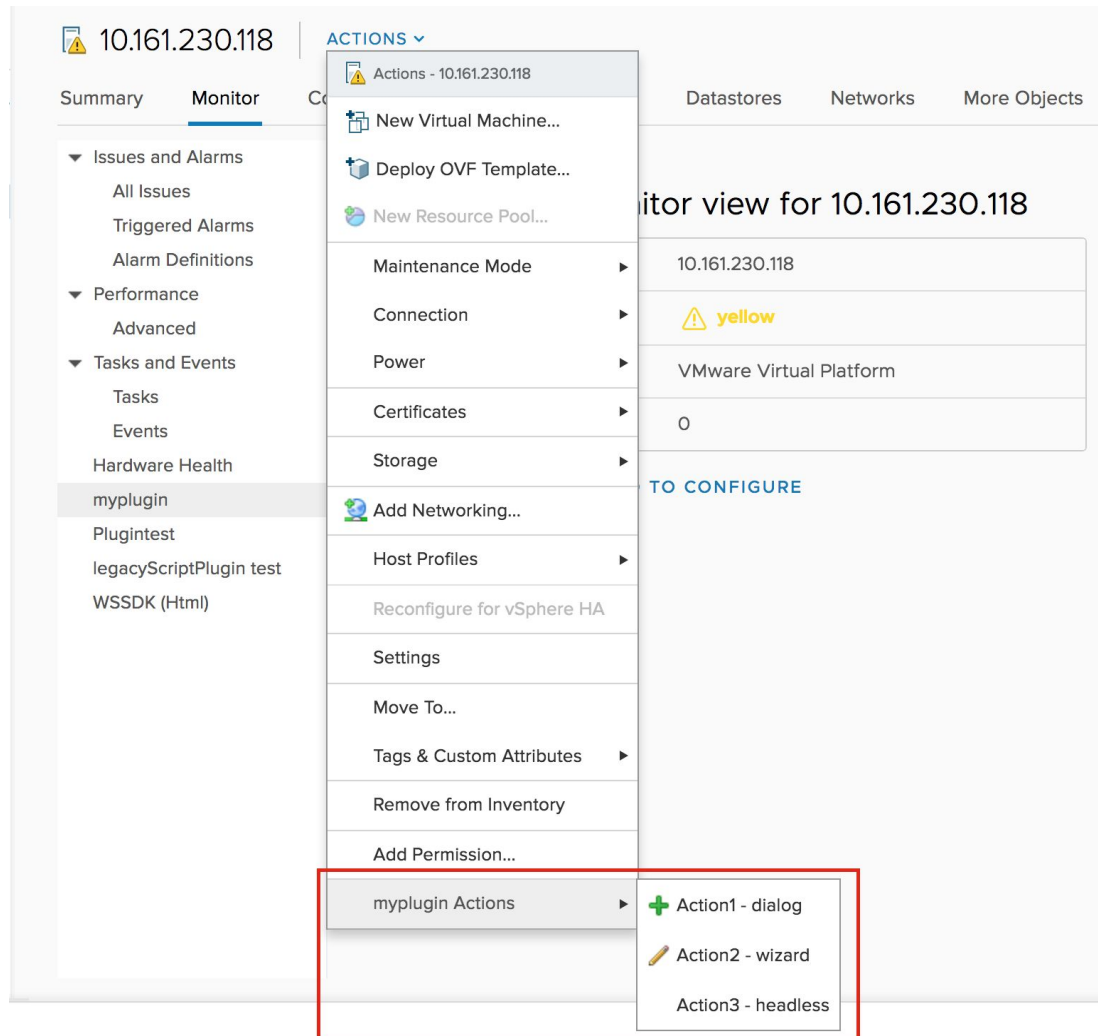
Each view is a separate application, running the plugin code loaded in the view's iFrame. All extra components used in dev mode are hidden. Select a Host and go to *Monitor > myplugin* to see the plugin's monitor view.

The screenshot shows the vSphere Client interface for a host with IP 10.192.126.200. The top bar includes the host IP, an 'ACTIONS' dropdown, and a navigation bar with links: Summary, Monitor (selected), Configure, Permissions, VMs, Resource Pools, Datastores, and Networks. The left sidebar contains a list of links: Issues and Alarms, Performance, Tasks and Events, Resource Reservation, CPU, Memory, Storage, Utilization, Hardware Health, WSSDK (Html), and myplugin. The main content area is titled 'myplugin Monitor view for 10.192.126.200' and contains a table with the following data:

Name	10.192.126.200
Status	yellow
Model	VMware Virtual Platform
> Virtual Machines	3

Below the table are two links: 'GO TO SUMMARY' and 'GO TO CONFIGURE'. A red dashed box highlights the main content area, and a red rounded rectangle at the bottom right contains the text 'Plugin object view'. A red arrow points to the 'myplugin' link in the left sidebar.

The action buttons used in dev mode are no longer visible. The plugin's host actions are available through the normal Action menu:



*Action1* and *Action2* open modal dialogs containing the same content as the dev mode version described above in [Actions - with modal dialog, wizard or headless](#).

**Note:** those actions are currently implemented to return a fake error containing the arguments used because it is an easy way to verify that the backend was called!

The difference with dev mode for *Action1* and *Action2* is that, in plugin mode, the modal dialog is created by the vSphere Client container, i.e. the frame and dialog title. The plugin content is limited to the iFrame under the title. For that reason `action1-component.html` doesn't contain any title, just the form representing the content. And `action2-wizard.html` has its title removed in plugin mode with this line:

```
<div *ngIf="!gs.isPluginMode()" class="wizard-title">{{title}}</div>
```

In this case the wizard look & feel is slightly different as shown in the screenshot below. There was also some style adjustments done in `style.css`.

Action2 wizard for 10.161.230.118

1 Step 1 Title

2 Step 2 Title

3 Step 3 Title

4 Summary

Step 1 title

Form parameters sent as action arguments:

Parameter 1 \*

Parameter 2

Parameter 3

some default value

Type A ▾

CANCEL

NEXT

## Modal Dialogs - local vs. global

Button *Hello (Popup)* in the main view opens a simple popup which is modal only for that view, see the first picture below. This is because the Clarity Modal component is handled completely in page `main.component.html`, which is contained in the view's `iFrame`. Such implementation is best for simple modals such as an alert box: it is small in size and the user is expected to close the modal right away.

vm vSphere Client

Menu ▾

Search

Administrator@VSPHERE.LOCAL ▾

Help ▾

Home

Shortcuts

Hosts and Clusters

VMs and Templates

Storage

Networking

Content Libraries

Global Inventory Lists

Administration

Tasks

Events

Tags & Custom Attributes

myplugin

Service Test

Click to call the EchoService

HELLO (POPUP)

GO TO SETTINGS

Echo Response

World!

(This popup is modal only with the plugin view)

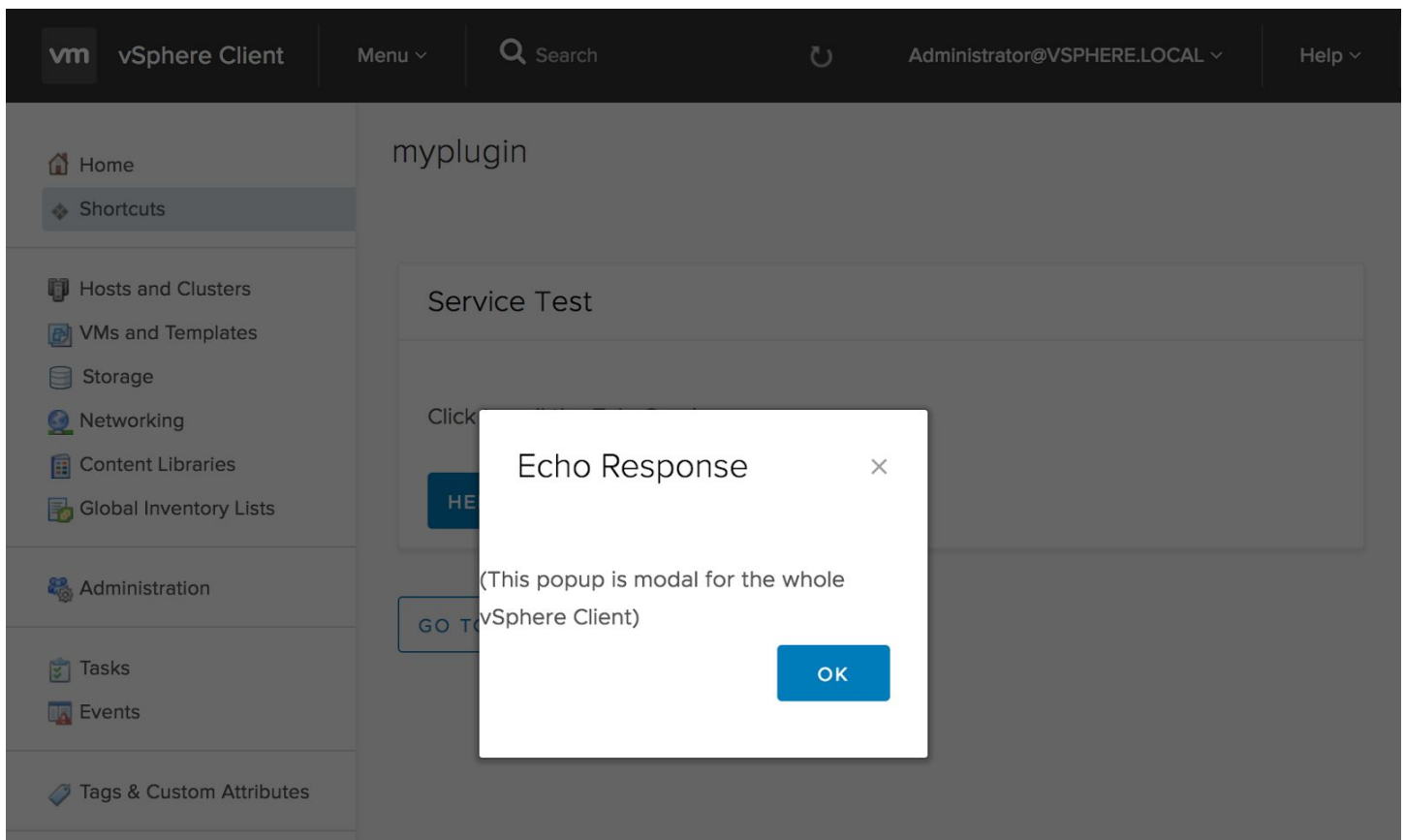
OK

However a local popup won't work as well in two use cases:

- The dialog size may be bigger than the view itself, for instance a wizard  
=> A local popup will be clipped by the view frame.
- The dialog content may be complex and stay up for a long time  
=> The user may be tempted to click away from that plugin view, the plugin has no control over that.  
Either the user loses the dialog completely when going back to the same view, or you have to manage a local state to restore things as they were...

The solution is to use a real modal dialog as shown in the second Hello example below. See `main.component.ts` where we use the API `openModalDialog`. The difference is that the modal frame is created by the Client itself, the plugin only has to fill in the content (under the Dialog title). The drawback is that the dialog content takes longer to load because it is a separate web app like any other plugin view. See [Production Optimizations](#) for techniques to speed up that view.

**Note:** with a local popup use the Clarity modals option `[clrModalStaticBackdrop]="true"` in order to block mouse clicks outside the dialog because it is false by default.



## Fast Development in Plugin Mode

It is possible to quickly refresh the code being tested in the vSphere Client. There are two approaches, each one requires that you [deploy your plugin package](#) at least once:

1. **Automated way:** run the `gulp watch` command in your plugin UI folder:
  - Any future change to a source file will trigger an instant refresh of the UI code at the correct Virgo runtime location (as long as you don't restart the server, see notes below).
2. **Manual way:** it is up to you to decide when to refresh the plugin UI.

Run this command: `./tools/deploy-war.[bat, sh]`

- This rebuilds the plugin `.war` file and copies it to the Virgo pickup directory at `<SDK_HOME>/vsphere-ui/server/pickup/`.
- You should see the redeploy trace in the Virgo console.
- If you are using SDK 6.5u1 or a Fling SDK this method requires two additional steps:
  - A. You must have set the flag `pickup.deployer=true` in `webclient.properties`.
  - B. `plugin-package.xml` must include attribute `scope="global"`

In either case the plugin view doesn't refresh automatically like it does in Dev mode because it is not the main application. If the view being updated is already visible, go to another view in vSphere Client and come back to that one, or hit the browser's Refresh button.

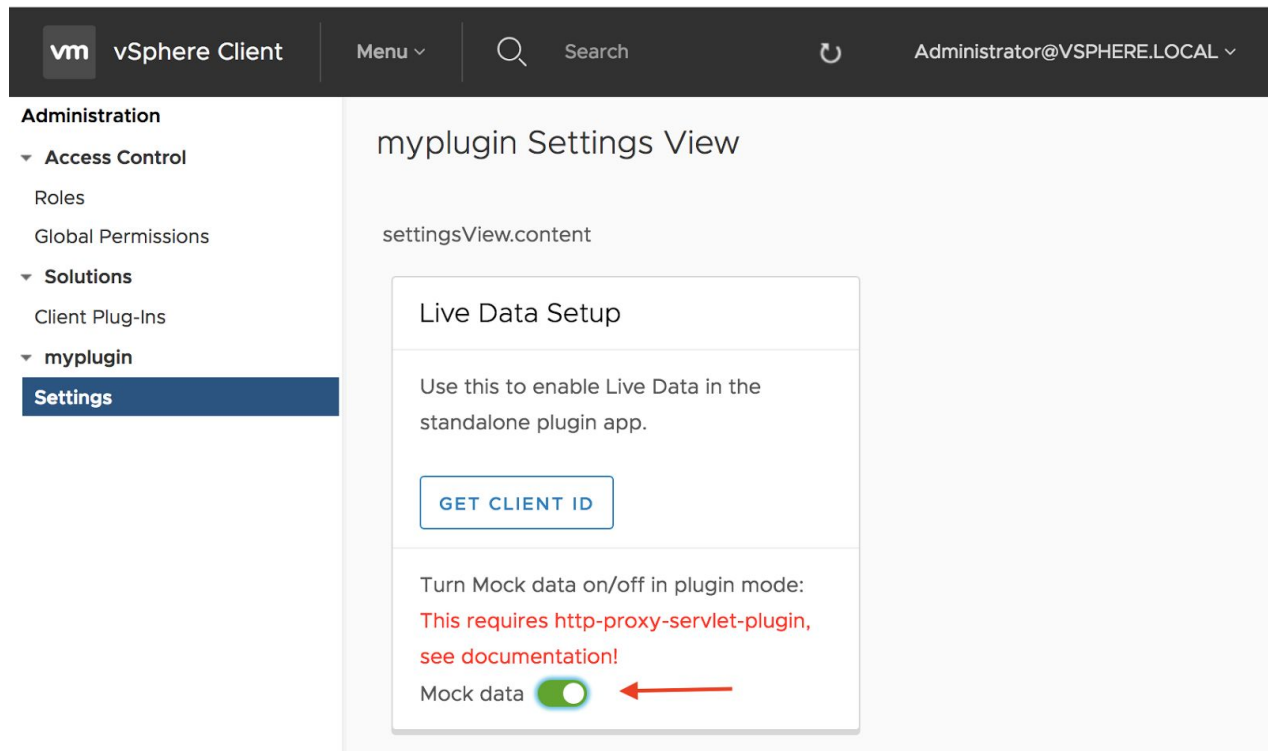
### Notes:

- If you get the error `'gulp' is not recognized as an internal or external command`, the easiest solution is to install gulp globally with `npm install gulp --global` (gulp is already installed as a local npm package and it should work as is on most systems).
- `gulp watch` needs to be restarted if you restart the Virgo server or redeploy the `.war` bundle in `server/pickup`, because the "cache" directory where it updates the UI files will have changed.
- Changes in `plugin.xml` or `.properties` files cannot be handled by `gulp watch`. Use the `deploy-war` script to pick up `plugin.xml` changes. In case of `.properties` changes you have to restart the Virgo server.
- See the script `gulpfile.js`, it looks for your local server directory under `VSPHERE_SDK_HOME` as the default location but you can set a `VIRGO_BASE_DIR` variable to point to another location.
- You can keep the plugin running in dev mode in parallel to validate changes in both environments!

## Using mock data in plugin mode

If your backend services are not quite ready, or if you simply want to test the plugin UI with the same mock data used in dev mode, you can enable mock data within vSphere Client itself!

First you must deploy `http-proxy-tool-plugin` located in `/tools/http-proxy-tool` (i.e. copy that plugin package folder to your `vsphere-ui/plugin-packages/` and restart the server. Once this is done go to the plugin Settings view and turn on the Mock data switch as shown below.



After that your UI services should return mock data instead of calling rest endpoints on Virgo as long as they follow the patterns used in `EchoService`, `HostService` or `ChassisService`. `EchoService` and `HostService` use mock data provided by `json-server`. They rely on `APP_CONFIG.getMockDataUrl` defined in `src/app/shared/app-config.ts`:

```
getMockDataUrl: function(pluginMode: boolean) {
  return pluginMode ? "https://localhost:9443/httpproxy" :
    "http://localhost:3000";
},
```

In dev mode `json-server` serves this data at `localhost:3000` by default, but in plugin mode we must use an `httpproxy` to access the same address without CORS problem. The `http-proxy-tool-plugin` contains two bundles:

- `http-proxy-servlet.jar`, the servlet from <https://github.com/mitre/HTTP-Proxy-Servlet>
- `http-proxy-tool.war`, the bundle which configures the servlet to redirect all requests to `http://localhost:3000` (see `web.xml`)

**Notes:** using “front-end” mock data in plugin mode the UI has the following limitations:

- Mock data cannot be used in the inventory since the Client makes requests to the backend
- In order to display mock data in object views you need to use the same object id as what your java service returns: this is the case for `Chassis` in the generated plugin, but not for `Host` views.
- Changes to chassis data don't work because the mock data is in memory and each modal dialog contains a separate web app. However it would work if chassis data was provided by `json-server`.

# Testing

## Debugging

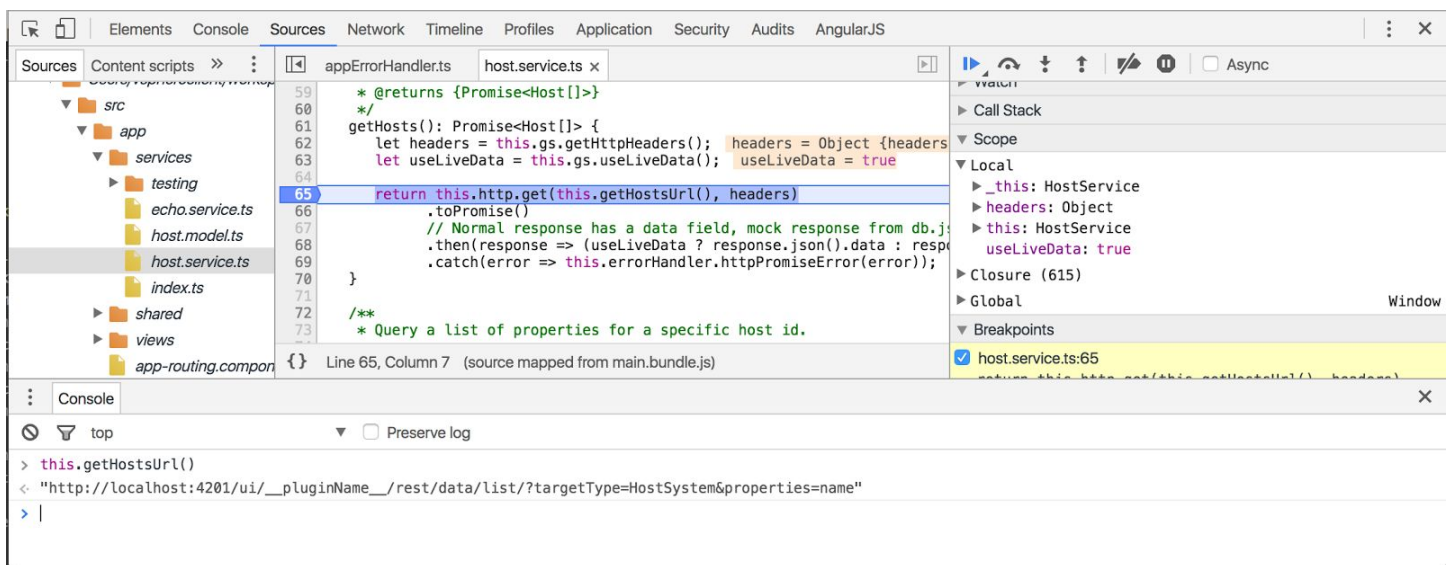
Debugging the Java service code requires that you start the local Virgo server in debug mode:

```
$VSPHERE_SDK_HOME/vsphere-ui/server/bin/startup.[sh,bat] -debug
```

The default debug port is 8000, so you just need to configure your IDE (Eclipse, IntelliJ, etc.) for remote debugging on that port.

Debugging the UI code is done best in the browser's developer tools window. See below a screenshot of Chrome's *Sources* view with the code stopped in *HostService*. The typescript code is in clear, it's very easy to follow the code logic at any place. The *Network* view is also very useful to check and filter HTTP requests.

In Chrome *Sources* view the easiest way to locate your source code for debugging is with the menu's *Go To File ...* (Command-P or Command-O on Mac) because the source tree on the left may be hard to navigate.



## Unit Testing with Jasmine

Angular provides many utilities to simplify unit tests, follow this documentation: [Techniques and practices for testing an Angular app](#).

Plugin-seed contains a fair amount of unit-tests to get you started and show off many good practices, see all the files ending with `.spec.ts`. For an example of view component unit test see `main.component.spec.ts`.

To run unit tests use the command `ng test`. In that terminal window unit tests will re-run automatically whenever the code changes until you kill the process, so it's easy to make sure you are not introducing errors!

The jasmine configuration is defined in `karma.conf.js`.



# Code Coverage

Code coverage information is generated automatically when running the command:

```
ng test --code-coverage
```

Each time the tests run the coverage data is generated in the folder `coverage`. Open `index.html` and see the coverage report. It will look like this, the red showing areas with less than 50% coverage:

64.82% Statements 422/651   50% Branches 58/116   33.74% Functions 55/163   64.88% Lines 388/598									
File ^		Statements ^		Branches ^		Functions ^		Lines ^	
src/	<div><div></div></div>	100%	30/30	100%	0/0	100%	1/1	100%	30/30
src/app/services/	<div><div></div></div>	87.37%	83/95	70.83%	17/24	60%	15/25	86.52%	77/89
src/app/services/testing/	<div><div></div></div>	39.29%	11/28	0%	0/4	12.5%	1/8	40%	10/25
src/app/shared/	<div><div></div></div>	80.1%	161/201	70.69%	41/58	52.08%	25/48	80.33%	147/183
src/app/shared/dev/	<div><div></div></div>	47.06%	72/153	0%	0/10	15.22%	7/46	47.14%	66/140
src/app/testing/	<div><div></div></div>	65.63%	21/32	0%	0/4	37.5%	3/8	65.38%	17/26
src/app/views/main/	<div><div></div></div>	39.58%	19/48	0%	0/6	7.14%	1/14	40%	18/45
src/app/views/modals/	<div><div></div></div>	39.06%	25/64	0%	0/10	15.38%	2/13	38.33%	23/60

Drill down in each directory and file to see exactly what is not covered yet but unit tests.

## End-to-end testing in Dev mode

End-to-end tests (e2e) are implemented with [Protractor](#). The generated plugin comes with just a few tests to help you understand the process. In dev mode you can focus on testing the internals of each view, the setup is fairly simple if you use mock data served by json-server.

- Make sure json-server is already running in another console (or do `npm run json-server`)
- Go to your plugin-ui directory
- Enter `ng e2e`

This will start a new build and launch the app in a browser while running each test. It uses the default protractor config file defined in `.angular-cli.json`, i.e. `./e2e/protractor-dev.config.js`

E2e tests for dev mode are located in `e2e/dev/app.e2e-spec.ts` and the [Page Objects](#) in `e2e/dev/app.po.ts`. Follow the Protractor documentation and online tutorials to expand the end-to-end tests coverage in your plugin application.

End-to-end testing is easier to achieve while your plugin is running in dev mode. It will be also easier to automate in a CI pipeline. Although it may not cover every plugin use cases and may not include live data the benefits of testing enough “UI logic” in that mode should not be ignored.



## End-to-end testing in Plugin mode

In addition to e2e tests in dev mode it is important to include 2e2 tests with the plugin running with vSphere Client, i.e. in plugin mode. This is harder to setup because vSphere Client is the container app, i.e. the tests must go through the Login page, navigate through various pages where the plugin views are visible, and deal with iFrames.

Here are the steps for running the tests included in `e2e/plugin`:

- You must have vSphere Client running with the plugin deployed
- Go to your plugin-ui directory
- Enter `ng e2e --config e2e/protractor-plugin.config.js --serve false`

This tells the `ng e2e` command to use a different config file for the plugin mode and not to serve the plugin app since it is already running in vSphere Client.

There are a few parameters that you may need to adjust for the built-in tests to run in your environment:

1. If you are not running a local vSphere Client at <https://localhost:9443/ui/>, change `BASE_URL` defined in `./e2e/helpers/util.js`
2. Change the default username and password in `e2e/protractor-plugin.config.js`
3. The test in `e2e/plugin/plugin-e2e.spec.ts` assumes that you are using vSphere Client 6.5.1 or a Fling version, where the shortcuts page has the URL defined in `navigateToShortcuts` in `e2e/plugin/plugin.po.ts`.

Once the built-in tests are working with your setup try to expand them to increase the test coverage.

---

## Internationalization

For globalization purpose your plugin should support the same locales as the vSphere Client: `en_US`, `de_DE`, `fr_FR`, `ja_JP`, `ko_KR`, `zh_CN` and `zh_TW`.

The generated plugin comes with text resource bundles in English and French under `src/webapp/locales`, see `com_mycompany_myplugin_en_US.properties` and `com_mycompany_myplugin_fr_FR.properties`.

Each view component must inject `I18nService`, as an `i18n` variable for instance. The view HTML template can then use `{{i18n.translate("key-name")}}` in place of static english for all visible text. For instance in `main.component.html`:

```
<div class="content-area">
  <p style="padding-bottom: 10px">{{i18n.translate("mainView.content")}}</p>
  <div class="card-columns card-columns-2">
    <div class="card clickable">
      <div class="card-header">{{i18n.translate("mainView.serviceTest")}}</div>
      <div class="card-block">{{i18n.translate("mainView.clickToCall")}}</div>
    ...
```

The translation for those three messages is found in the .properties files:

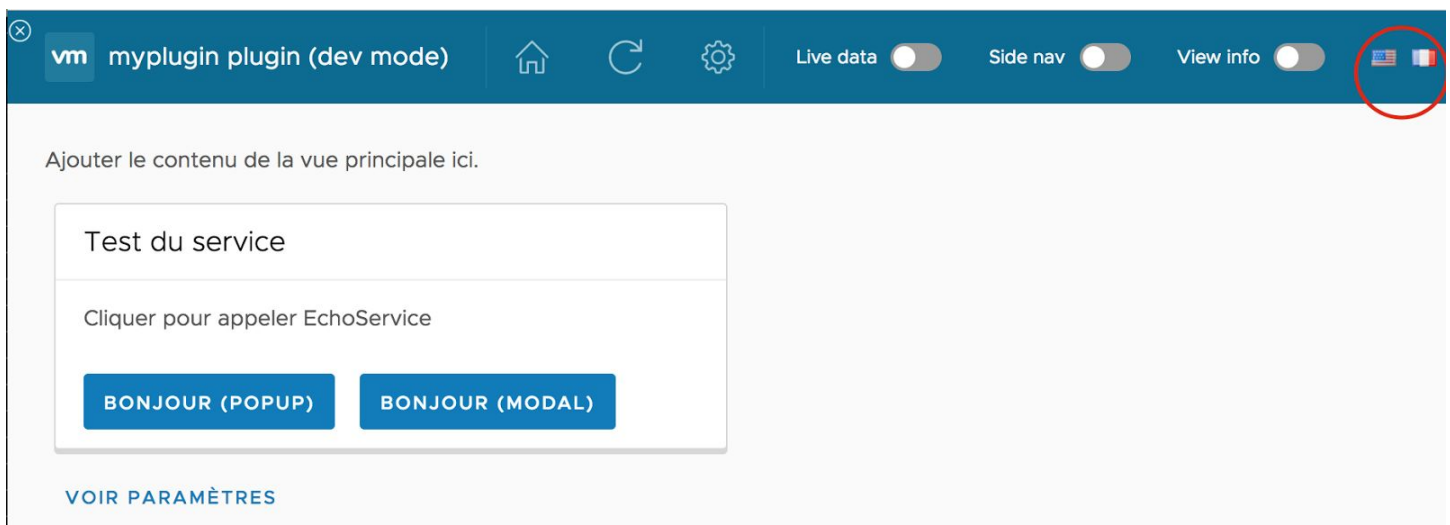
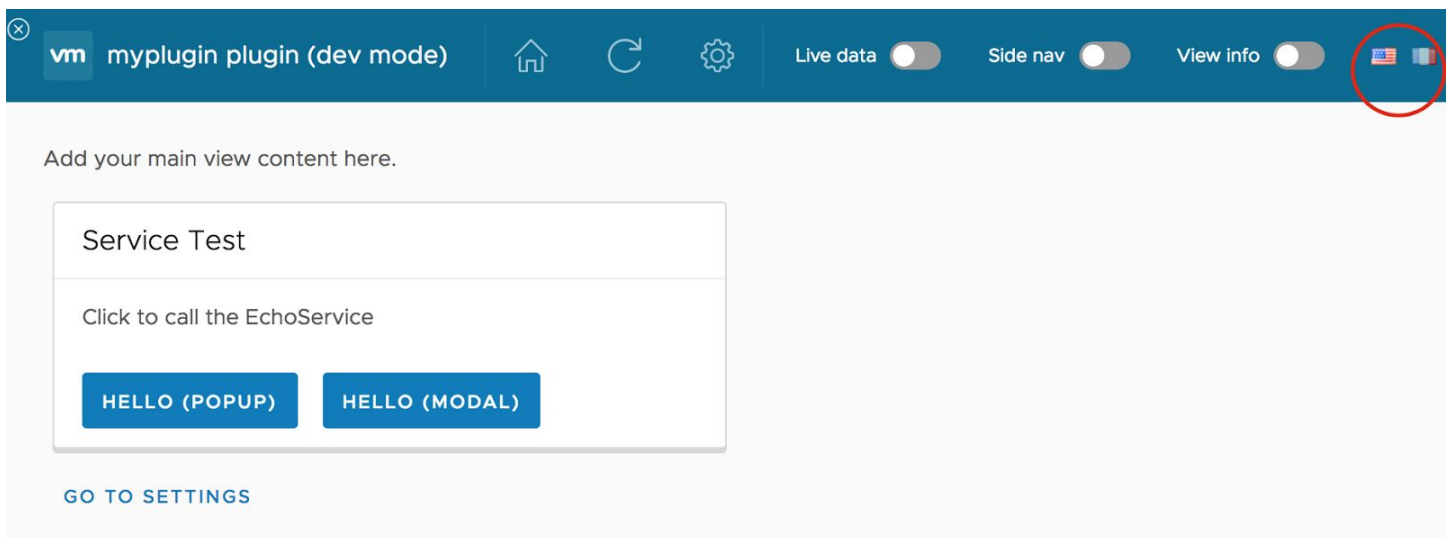
en\_US:

```
mainView.serviceTest = Service Test
mainView.clickToCall = Click to call the EchoService
mainView.content = Add your main view content here.
```

fr\_FR:

```
mainView.serviceTest = Test du service
mainView.clickToCall = Cliquer pour appeler EchoService
mainView.content = Ajouter le contenu de la vue principale ici.
```

The application header provides an easy way to test your translation in dev mode. Click on the US or French flag on the right to switch between the two languages:



## Notes:

1. There is no need to translate any text inside the “dev UI” components (header, sidenav, extra text, etc.)
2. In order for the translation to work in dev mode each `.properties` file must be converted to a `.json` file that will be loaded dynamically (see `initLocale` in `i18n.service.ts`). The initial `.json` files are provided in the generated plugin, but as you make changes you must run the script `tools/convert-properties.[sh,bat]` to update the `.json` files. Changes will be picked up right away after you switch back and forth between 2 languages.
3. In plugin mode the `.properties` files are used as-is in the HTML Client. For resource bundle to work in the Flex client they must be compiled into `.swf` files by the `build-war.[sh,bat]` script.
4. In plugin mode, any change made to `.properties` files cannot be loaded without redeploying the plugin.

The text translations that cannot be seen in the standalone app are the “external” text used in `plugin.xml`: view names, menu action labels, etc. This text is displayed directly by the vSphere Client, i.e. not by the plugin.

Angular includes its own [i18n tools](#) that we didn’t have time to try out yet. In theory it should work in a plugin environment but it will be restricted to translations appearing inside a view, i.e. `properties` files will still be needed for the external text used in `plugin.xml`.

---

## Production Optimizations

There are several ways to optimize your application for production. We cover only the basics here, see the Angular doc [Optimize for production](#) for more ideas.

## Build Options

The build described in [Deploying your plugin with vSphere Client](#) is the dev build without any optimization. It uses the `ng build` command and generate several “...bundle.js” files in the `/dist` folder:

```
> ng build
Hash: 79ef83e65a656f9da059
Time: 14657ms
{0} main.bundle.js, main.bundle.js.map (main) 148 kB {3} [initial] [rendered]
{1} scripts.bundle.js, scripts.bundle.js.map (scripts) 472 kB {4} [initial] [rendered]
{2} styles.bundle.js, styles.bundle.js.map (styles) 770 kB {4} [initial] [rendered]
{3} vendor.bundle.js, vendor.bundle.js.map (vendor) 3.61 MB [initial] [rendered]
{4} inline.bundle.js, inline.bundle.js.map (inline) 0 bytes [entry] [rendered]
```

It is normal for those bundles to be large, there is no optimization and the majority of the content is the `.map` information to help debugging. See the Angular-CLI and webpack documentation to learn more about the module bundling features.

The production build is done by using `ng build --prod`

When using the Ant script in `tools/build-war.xml` you should edit the `make-bundle` target and use `ng-build-prod` instead of `ng-build`, like this

```
<target name="make-bundle" depends="clean, ng-build-prod, compile-resources">
```

The generated bundles are smaller because they are minified, uglified and have hashes in their names, although here again the size doesn't reflect what is truly loaded at runtime. Once you deploy your plugin using the `--prod` build option you can verify in the browser's Network console that the the load time is much faster because the true data being loaded is much smaller. For instance in the current version `vendor.bundle.js` shows 176K to load and `main.bundle.js` shows 50K to load.

**Note:** the `--prod` build enables the production environment in `src/environment/environment.prod.ts` which in terms triggers `enableProdMode()` in `main.ts` and Angular code runs faster because development specific checks are disabled.

## AOT and Lazy loading

Other ways to optimize your Angular plugin is to use [AOT compilation](#) (Ahead-of-time) and [Lazy loaded modules](#). Besides the official Angular doc there are many blogs available online explaining the benefits of such techniques. Here is [one](#) on AOT.

The standard way to enable AOT in Angular CLI is to add the `--aot` option to `ng serve`. That option is also required at the moment to enable lazy loading.

```
ng serve --aot is not used by default in the start script of package.json because it slows down live update. We recommend to use --aot only temporarily in dev mode, to verify that your lazy loaded modules are setup correctly (see below). On the other hand it is used by default in the production build target of build-war.xml, see <target name="ng-build-prod">.
```

At build time the `--prod` flag automatically turn on the `--aot` flag.

Lazy loading means that you can split your application into separate modules and defer loading the code for these modules until the router goes there. Typically each plugin view can be a separate lazy loaded module so that the app only loads the view's code plus the common code. The performance improvement become noticeable only for large amounts of code of course, but it's a good idea to start with such architecture. The `SettingsComponent` in `app/views/settings` is configured to be lazy loaded and you can repeat this pattern elsewhere:

- It has its own module definition, `settings.module.ts`, which is declared in the main `app.module.ts`
- It has its own routes in `settings-routing.module.ts`
- `SettingsComponent` is not referenced from anywhere else in the app code, and in particular not declared in `app.module.ts` like other view components.
- The build generates a separate chunk of code for that module: `0.xxxx.chunk.js`.
- You can see in dev mode, in the Browser network console, that `0.xxxx.chunk.js` is loaded only after clicking to go to Settings.
- Similarity, In plugin mode, `0.xxxx.chunk.js` is never loaded except for the Settings view extension.

- Once you apply this pattern to multiple views and the code gets larger the benefits will become noticeable.

We recommend to use [source-map-explorer](#) to verify that `main.bundle.js` only contains relevant code for your production version.

Install with `npm install -g source-map-explorer`

Run with `source-map-explorer dist/main.bundle.js`

## Clarity Component Modularization

Clarity ships its components in their own individual Angular modules. Thus, you can load a specific NgModule for each Clarity component that your app uses instead of loading the whole ClarityModule as it is done in plugin seed. For example, if your app uses Datagrid and Modal components you can import their modules as follows:

```
import { ClrDatagridModule, ClrModalModule } from "clarity-angular";
```

---

## Tips & Best Practices

This section includes additional development tips not covered elsewhere in the document.

### Online Tips

- [Best Practices for Developing Extensions for the vSphere Web Client](#)
- [Common Packaging Pitfalls When Developing vSphere Client HTML Plug-ins](#)

## Testing your plugin directly on vCSA

The standard HTML SDK setup requires you to run the Virgo server locally, on your Windows or Mac, after registering it to an existing **vCSA** (vCenter Server Appliance). This section explains how to avoid this step and use directly the vSphere Client running on vCSA. The other advantage is that you will be testing your plugin in a “production environment”, accessible by other people in your team

1. You still need to install the HTML SDK since it contains additional samples, docs, and the libraries required to package your plugin (Java library for compiling services, and Flex libraries for compiling UI resources to be used when the plugin runs in the Flex Client). *But you can skip the instructions for registering vCenter and starting the local Virgo server.*
2. Build and run the plugin UI in *Dev mode*, using a mock server for backend data.
3. When you are ready to test in *Plugin mode*, build the plugin package folder with the script `tools/build-plugin-package.[bat, sh]`. But instead of deploying the plugin in your local vSphere Client deploy it on the vSphere Client instance of your vCSA:

- The easiest way to do that is to copy your plug-in package directory to the Flex client or HTML client host server, under the plugin-packages directory. For instance for Flex client with vCSA 6.0 and 6.5 it will be in `/usr/lib/vmware-vmphere-client/plugin-packages`. (For the HTML client replace `vmware-vmphere-client` with `vmware-vmphere-ui`.)
- Change the owner of your plug-in directory to `vsphere-client`, for all files like this:  

```
cd /usr/lib/vmware-vmphere-client/plugin-packages
chmod -R vsphere-client myplugin
```
- Restart the server:  
(vCSA 6.5) `service-control --start vsphere-client` (or `vsphere-ui`)  
(vCSA 6.0) `service vsphere-client restart`
- Note that you could also register your plugin as a vCenter extension (as if you were in a production environment). The advantage is that it will be downloaded and deployed automatically. But the main drawback is that testing multiple iterations requires to bump the extension version each time, or to remove the virgo cache for that plugin, so that each new one gets downloaded again.

Debugging the UI code while running off vCSA is the same, everything is done through the Browser developer tools.

To set a remote Java debugging session with Virgo running on vCSA, follow these steps:

- Edit `/usr/lib/vmware-vmphere-client/server/wrapper/conf/wrapper.conf` to uncomment the following lines (you can also change the port number to something else than 8001)  

```
wrapper.java.additional.16=-Xdebug
wrapper.java.additional.17=-Xnoagent
wrapper.java.additional.18=-Xrunjdwp:transport=dt_socket,server=y,suspend=n,address=8001
```
- You may need to open port 8001 in your firewall, here is the linux command for VCSA:  

```
iptables -A INPUT -p tcp --dport 8001 -j ACCEPT
```
- Restart the VWC server with `service-control --start vsphere-client` (or `vsphere-ui`)

The [Live Data mode](#) is also possible, follow the same steps to initialize the Client session. The only change required is the proxy configuration in `myplugin-ui/proxy-conf.json`, replace:

```
"target": "https://localhost:9443",
```

with

```
"target": "https://your_vcsa_ip/",
```

The main drawback of not having a local vSphere Client is that updating the UI code is more tedious: you cannot use the script `gulp watch` as is. The idea is to do most of the work on Dev mode, using Live data if necessary, and only check the Plugin mode from time to time.

## Refreshing a view with the latest data

When data changes in the backend it is up to the plugin to refresh its view displaying that data. Other parts of the vSphere Client take advantage of a “live update” mechanism to reflect changes in vCenter but there is no such API for plugins.

Here are several ways to refresh a plugin view:

1. Navigating away from a view and coming back to it will usually trigger a refresh, because the plugin `iFrame` will be reloaded.
2. Adding a timer in your view component to reload data periodically is possible but is not recommended. It will add stress and is not an intuitive UX.
3. Adding a *Reload* button is a simple solution to make it clear that the view data is not updated automatically.
4. Finally you can implement a Refresh handler using the `setGlobalRefreshHandler` API. This handler is called each time the user clicks on the global *Refresh* button in the vSphere Client toolbar. Within plugin-seed this handler is integrated with the `RefreshService`. See the following code in various component constructors:

```
// Subscribe to refreshService to handle the global refresh action
this.refreshSubscription = refreshService.refreshObservable$.subscribe(
    () => this.refreshView());
```

Regarding `RefreshService` note that you also need to call `changeDetector.detectChanges()` once the data is retrieved in order to force a DOM update (this is not necessary in Dev mode with a standalone app, but in Plugin mode, the Angular `NgZone` where the plugin view code runs doesn't detect changes automatically).

## Building a plugin without any Java service

This is the use case of a front-end UI calling Restful APIs directly on a remote server and which doesn't need Java services to handle vSphere data. Please send us feedback for any issue or question!

A plugin created with plugin-seed includes a service layer by default, in folder `myplugin-service`, because the standard way to access backend data is to go through Spring MVC controllers and some Java logic running in Virgo. That layer communicates in turn with a database or backend server using the protocol of your choice. In particular this is how plugins access vSphere data and vSphere APIs as shown in `DataAccessController.java` here, or in the SDK samples.

When using Restful APIs your data services are Angular services such as `echo.service.ts` and `host.service.ts` but use full HTTPS urls: something like `https://backend-url/rest/some-api` to replace `this.gs.getWebContextPath() + "/rest/services/echo"` which relies on the plugin `WebContextPath`.

The URL `backend-url` is usually not known in advance, so the plugin must be able to get its value at runtime. One option is to include a small configuration UI within the plugin to let users enter the URL value and then save it in the browser local storage.

Follow these steps to build a plugin *myplugin* without any Java service:

- Remove the directory `myplugin-service`
- In `myplugin-ui`, build the plugin package with `tools/build-plugin-no-java.[sh, bat]` (instead of `build-plugin-package.[sh, bat]`). This invokes the script `tools/build-war-no-java.[sh, bat]` and generates a `plugin-package` folder containing only the UI `.war` bundle.

- Note the following differences in the .war bundle compared to standard plugins:
  - The plugin manifest is a copy of `webapp/META-INF/MANIFEST-no-java.MF`, where `Import-Packages` has been removed since the plugin doesn't rely on any Java bundle.
  - `webapp/WEB-INF` no longer contains `bundle-context.xml` and `web.xml`

Additional considerations:

### The API requests must be over HTTPS

The browser will reject any non-secure requests because the plugin runs within an HTTPS client. If your backend only serves HTTP, the alternate solution is to use the `http-proxy-servlet` described in the next section.

### CORS and Certificates must be configured

Your Restful API server must enable [CORS](#) and have the proper certificates installed. If CORS is not possible, use the `http-proxy-servlet` described in the next section.

### You are responsible for handling authentication on your backend

In a plugin's Java service layer, the session is already authenticated for accessing vSphere APIs under the logged-in user. When calling backend APIs you need to handle user authentication yourself. For instance the plugin can bring up a login dialog that calls your server's login API and authenticates the user during the duration of his/her vSphere Client session. If you'd like this API authentication to persist across sessions you could save it in the browser *localStorage* with an expiration date, or save it in your own backend.

### A few extensions are limited when no Java service is present

Using `<conditionalProperty>` and `<propertyConditions>` as filters for `plugin.xml` extensions is restricted to vSphere object properties (for instance `config.template` for a VM object). You can no longer use custom properties, such as `samples:isPoweredOn` in the ChassisA sample, because there is no Java service implementing a property provider to compute that value. Practically that means that you cannot enable/disable a menu action or filter an extension based on a custom property.

The two other use cases that are not possible in a UI-only plugin are:

- Custom objects are not supported (i.e. Chassis and Racks in the SDK samples), because they require their own Data Providers in Java.
- List view extensibility is not supported, also because this involves custom properties and thus some Data Provider.

## Integrating http-proxy-servlet to access backend APIs

This use case is related to the previous one because no Java service are required to call a Restful API server, but instead of calling the server directly the requests go through a `http-proxy-servlet` included with your plugin. This is especially useful if the backend server doesn't support CORS. Please send us feedback for any issue/question when using this solution!

In this mode the plugin's Java "service" layer is replaced by a fixed bundle `http-proxy-servlet.jar`. The script `build-plugin-with-proxy.[sh, bat]` builds a plugin package containing that .jar file, and the plugin .war bundle configured correctly to use it.



The steps are the following:

1. Make a copy of `http-proxy-servlet.jar` from `plugin-seed/tools/http-proxy-tool-plugin/plugins/` into the tools folder of your plugin, e.g. to `myplugin-ui/tools`
2. In the plugin war configuration, `myplugin-ui/src/webapp/WEB-INF/web-with-proxy.xml`, change the default value `http://localhost:3000` to the *targetUri* for your backend APIs. This file will be renamed `web.xml` by the build script.  
(you can keep the default value to experiment with the json-server which runs at `localhost:3000`)
3. Run the script:  

```
cd myplugin-ui
./tools/build-plugin-with-proxy.[sh, bat]
```
4. Restart the Virgo server.

All HTTP requests sent by the plugin UI code are now proxied to the *targetUri* defined in `web.xml`!

You can verify that this works with the *Echo Service* page in Plugin mode, if you kept the default `web.xml` that points to the json-server API:

- A click on the Hello button shows this request in the browser Network console:  
<https://localhost:9443/ui/myplugin/rest/services/echo>
- It is proxied to the following url and hits the json-server “echo” API (\*)  
<http://localhost:3000/services/echo>

(\*) Note that the `echo` end-point is defined as `/echos` in `db.json`, but `/services/echo` also works because of the `json-server-routes.json` configuration included in the command line. This is the same end point as the `EchoService` java controller included in the plugin service.

On the other hand, the Chassis and the Host data requests fail with 404 because the json-server is not configured to handle those API calls in Plugin mode.

If you cannot hard-code *targetUri* for the production version it is possible to parameterize it with query parameters as explained at <https://github.com/mitre/HTTP-Proxy-Servlet>:

```
<init-param>
  <param-name>targetUri</param-name>
  <param-value>http://{_subHost}.behindfirewall.abc.com:{_port}/{_path}</param-value>
</init-param>
```

The values of those query parameters need to be entered as part of the initial plugin configuration: for instance each user will go through a one-time configuration UI and save it in their browser local storage.

Here are other important considerations when integrating `http-proxy-servlet`:

### Proxying to a HTTPS url requires to handle certificates...

With the current `http-proxy-servlet` you will get a `javax.net.ssl.SSLHandshakeException` because the backend server's certificates are not known to the Virgo server. We will be posting a solution as soon as we have something practical to share.

### You are responsible for handling authentication on your backend

See the same authentication consideration [above](#).

### A few extensions are limited when no Java service is present

See the same point [above](#).

### It is possible to combine both the http-proxy-servlet and a plugin service layer

The script `build-plugin-with-proxy` removes the service layer completely, it assumes that the plugin will only use REST Apis on the backend. It could be modified to have an hybrid version where both `myplugin-service` and `http-proxy-servlet` are present. Let us know if you have such a use case.

### http-proxy-servlet is covered by a standard Apache license

See <https://github.com/mitre/HTTP-Proxy-Servlet/blob/master/LICENSE.txt>

---

## Plugin-seed in Details

In this section we review some good style guide practices and we explore the particularities of the most important files, grouped by folders and by names. *This review is limited to the UI code, please see the SDK documentation for more information on the service Java code.*

## UI code organization and syntax

We follow the [Angular Style Guide](#) as much as possible, it is a very good read!

In particular:

- Only one service or component per file
- Small functions
- Consistent file names + separate css and html files, like:
  - `foo.component.html`
  - `foo.component.scss`
  - `foo.component.spec.ts`
  - `foo.component.ts`
- Test files (`.spec.ts`) are kept right next to the original source and easy to find!
- Consistent coding conventions, including these [TypeScript guidelines](#)
- Intuitive folder and file names
- Code as clear as possible

Regarding [Angular modularity](#), there is still room for improvement. If your application gets bigger it's definitely advised to define multiple modules. As a starting point there is a `SharedModule` in `src/app/shared` for common UI components, a `SettingsModule` in `app/view/settings` (lazy loaded) and the main `AppModule`.

**Note:** you will notice that each directory under `src/app` contains an `index.ts` [barrel file](#) to simplify imports. This works pretty well but this is not required, you can always import a component explicitly by name. One

important point with barrel files is that the order is significant if the components listed in the file have dependencies on each other, i.e. always import the lower component first.

## Source files

### src/app/services

`echo.service.ts` shows how to use [Observables](#) or Promises for your backend calls.

`host.model.ts` is a simple object model for the Host properties we're interested in. A good practice is to match the json data returned by the backend to make the conversion easy. In this case we must do some additional conversion for the property names.

`host.service.ts` handles the rest calls to get either the list of hosts or specific properties for a host. Note the following:

- `getHostsUrl()` allows to switch easily between mock data and live data. It is better to do it at this lowest level, rather than having different APIs like `getMockHosts` and `getLiveHosts`.
- All http requests require a special header for Live Data to work, see `getHttpHeaders()`.
- The hosts response (coming from `DataAccessController.java` in the service layer) uses an extra data field. Unfortunately it is not possible to do the same in `db.json` (mock data).
- Error handling is a must for any backend call.
- `getHostProperties()` is written to accept any list of host properties, although we only used it for one set of properties (see `app-config.js`)

`nav.service.ts` is a generic service for navigating between views, regardless of the dev or plugin mode.

### src/app/services/chassis

Services supporting the chassis integration

### src/app/shared

The `shared` folder could also be called `common` as it contains several utilities that are not application specific and could be reused in other apps. The `dev` subfolder is specifically about utilities that are only used in dev mode.

`app-alert.component` and `app-alert.service` allow to display simple alerts at the top of the window, with the help of [Clarity's Alert](#). In plugin mode the alert banner is at the top of the plugin view.

`AppAlertService` uses observable streams to open or close alerts. Currently only one alert can be visible at a time, so when two errors occur in separate calls the user only sees the last one. Another improvement could be to make the alert go away automatically after a timeout value. If you search the source for `closeAlert()` you can see the various events that close an existing alert.

`app-config.ts` contains application level constants.

`appErrorHandler.ts` provides centralized error handling. It is important to display meaningful error messages to users but also during the development process.

`globals.services.ts` is the service which facilitates the mixed-mode development process. It is injected in many components, for instance to show and hide elements with `showDevUI()`, `isPluginMode()` or to switch the data mode at runtime with `useLiveData()`. Note the following:

- The initialization of `webPlatform` is compatible with Flex Client 6.0, 6.5 and HTML Client 6.5. (There is no need to import the file `web-platform.js` used in older style plugins)
- Also `webPlatform` has the type `WebPlatform` in order to provide type checking for all SDK calls.
- Flags are stored in `localStorage` in dev mode (i.e. Browser cookies) so that the app can reload in the same state.
- `getHttpHeaders` is necessary to enable the Live Data mode

`i18n.service.ts` handles text translation.

`refresh.service.ts` is a simple service used to send a "refresh event" to any observer view. It is called from the *Refresh* button on the toolbar. See [Refreshing a view when data changes](#).

`shared.modules.ts` groups the shared UI components into one module so that it can be imported by different other modules (i.e. a separate module is required for those components because they are being used in more than one other module)

`vSphereClientSdkTypes.ts` defines the `WebPlatform` TypeScript "binding"

## **src/app/shared/dev**

This folder contains only utilities used in dev mode. It is not a lot of additional code but the production build could be optimized to remove this code.

`app-header-component.ts` is the blue header used in dev mode to ties all the plugin views together. Feel free to add other tools.

`clientid.component.ts` is the modal dialog used to set or get the session client id for [Live Data](#).

`dialog-box.component.ts` is a generic OK/Cancel dialog used to wrap modal dialog sub-components in dev mode. It is used in the main view for one of the Echo service dialogs, and in the Host monitor view for the `action1` example. It relies on `dynamic-dialog.component.ts` which implements a way to inject components dynamically.

Let's take the example of `src/app/views/main/main.component.html` which contains:

```
<dialog-box *ngIf="!gs.isPluginMode()"></dialog-box>
```

In `main.component.ts` that `dialogBox` element is used to open the modal dialog with:

```
this.dialogBox.openEchoModal(this.echoMsg, title);
```

and `openEchoModal` is an APIs of `dialog-box.component.ts` which uses the separate component `EchoModalComponent` to display the content of the Echo service test dialog.

There are two reasons to implement modals that way:

1. [Modal dialogs](#) that are modal for the entire app must use a component restricted to the dialog content, because in plugin mode the dialog frame and title is provided by the vSphere Client.

2. Dynamic injection allows to leverage a single `dialog-box` component for all modals that share the same footer.

All components injected in `dialog-box` must have a `handleSubmit()` method that gets called when OK is clicked.

`sidenav.component.ts` is a generic side navigation bar used to emulate the vSphere Client navigator in dev mode. It is populated by default by the list of hosts (either mock data or live data) but it can be modified to display any list of course. Note that selecting a host triggers `showObjectView()` which is the way to display the current object view for that particular host.

`subnav.component.ts` adds the standard tabs to switch between object views. It can be customized to add your own tabs.

`webPlatformStub.ts` is the stub used both in dev mode and for unit testing.

## **src/app/testing**

This directory contains testing stubs.

## **src/app/views**

`chassis-summary/chassis-summary.component.ts` The Chassis object *summary* view.

`main/main.component.ts` The plugin's main view, that is opened when clicking on the shortcut icon in the vSphere Client home page.

`modal/action1-modal.component.ts` The Action1 modal component, see also `dialog-box.component.ts`

`modal/action2-wizard.component.ts` The Action2 wizard component

`modal/echo-modal.component.ts` The Echo modal component, see also `dialog-box.component.ts`

`monitor/monitor.component.ts` The Host *monitor* and *configure* views

`not-implemented-yet/niy.component.ts` A component that can be reused by views which don't have any content yet.

`settings/` contains the plugin's Settings view which is visible in the Administration area. It is configured differently than other views because it is an example of lazy loaded module. See [AOT and Lazy loading](#) above for details.

`summary/summary.component.ts` The Host *summary* view.

## **src/app/**

`app.component.ts` is the top app component. Its HTML template contains the top router outlet  
`<router-outlet></router-outlet>`

`app.module.ts` is the main app module.

`app-routing.component.ts` is the component used to redirect all `index.html` views in plugin mode.

`app-routing.module.ts` is the main routing module

## **src/assets/**

`css/plugin-icons.css` External icons, i.e. used in menus, shortcuts or object lists

`images/` Used for both external icons and other image assets

## **src/webapp/locales**

This folder contains the resource bundles for i18n support. See [Internationalization](#).

## **src/webapp/**

`META-INF/MANIFEST.MF` Plugin UI bundle Manifest (standard version when using Java services)

`META-INF/MANIFEST-no-java.MF` Manifest for plugins without any Java bundle.

`META-INF/MANIFEST-with-proxy.MF` Manifest for plugins using the `http-proxy-servlet`.

`WEB_INF/spring/bundle-context.xml` Spring configuration for standard plugins using services.

`WEB_INF/web.xml` Web-app configuration for standard plugins using Java services.

`WEB_INF/web-with-proxy.xml` Special configuration for plugins using the `http-proxy-servlet`.

`plugin.xml` Plugin extensions meta-data.

## **src/**

`index.html` will be updated automatically by the build. Note the logic to set `base href`.

`main.ts` contains the bootstrap code and calls `enableProdMode()` for production builds.

`styles.css` contains global styles that apply to the whole app. It is used to override two styles in order to adjust the wizard component (size lg) inside the plugin dialog, see screenshot in [Differences with Dev Mode](#).

## **Removing code that you don't need**

This section provides some help into removing code that you don't need in the generated plugin.

### **Removing all Chassis code**

If your plugin is not going to support custom objects such as the Chassis feature you can remove all related code with the shell script `/tools/remove-chassis-code.sh` in both projects, `myplugin-ui` and `myplugin-service`. Afterwards, be sure to rebuild the plugin package folder with `tools/build-plugin-package.sh` and restart the Virgo server.

To run the same scripts on Windows you can install [cygwin](#) or find an equivalent `sed` tool.

The scripts `remove-chassis-code.sh` removes both some specific files, and blocks of code marked with the tags `[removable-chassis-code]` or `[removable-chassis-line]`.

---

# Summary of the dev mode advantages

Below is a list of advantages of the integrated dev mode approach.

- The whole plugin can be developed as an integrated single page web app outside the vSphere Client.
- It is only one app, with a runtime flag to show/hide the extra dev UI and handle view routing.
- The extra code and patterns used for dev mode are simple to use.
- It is easier to focus entirely on the UI/UX in each view, without vSphere Client in the picture.
- It is easier to build quickly, prototype quickly, test quickly, make errors and fix them quickly!
- Debugging is easier
- Its simple and natural to use mock data to abstract backend services
- It provides a live-data mode to end-to-end integration with backend services
- End-to-end UI testing is easier (than doing everything in vSphere Client)
- This provides a conversion path for an existing standalone app to become a plugin.
- Vice-versa, a plugin can be converted more easily into a standalone app for other use cases.

---

## Developing without standalone dev mode

The traditional way of developing plugins is to deploy the UI code directly to vSphere Client whether you are prototyping or testing. It is still possible to keep the development cycle pretty fast, i.e. have the UI refreshed in seconds. Here are some guidelines for using this approach or for combining the two:

1. Check out the [SDK Fling](#) sample `custom-object` that uses the SystemJS module loader. That sample doesn't include a standalone mode but it comes with a gulp script that handles the plugin packaging and provides a watch mode: after each code change the modified files are compiled and copied to the correct Virgo runtime location, so it's easy to test what was changed right away.
2. A plugin with only one or two views may be a good candidate for ignoring the extra dev mode UI, header and side nav, as little navigation is involved. For instance if your plugin consists only of a global view you could keep `MainComponent` out of the generated code and remove all dev UI code. You can still do `npm start` to run the view by itself (for instance to use mock data), or you can package the UI bundle, deploy it once and use `gulp watch` to keep refreshing the UI in vSphere Client.
3. Another use case consists in using the dev mode approach only at the beginning to take advantage of the generated code and to learn the tech stack - Angular, Typescript, Clarity - without backend integration. Later on, you can include backend services and begin using the [gulp watch](#) command to refresh the UI directly for the plugin running in vSphere Client. You can go back and forth between the two mode, or just drop the standalone mode completely. (Remember that it doesn't cost much to keep the extra dev UI components code, and that they can [hide easily](#))

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## Known Issues

Clarity components issues are tracked at <https://github.com/vmware/clarity/issues>

Angular issues are tracked at <https://github.com/angular/angular/issues>

vSphere Client SDK issues should be reported on [this VMware community forum](#)

### Compilation issues caused by newer npm packages:

- If you run into Typescript compilation issues, during `npm start` for instance, *without having changed anything to the plugin-seed version you downloaded* it is likely caused by a newer npm package that came out after that plugin-seed release. Note that most packages in `seed-ui/package.json` use a caret (^) in front of their version number, to indicate that newer minor versions should be compatible.
- One way to avoid these issues in your development pipeline is to lock down npm versions with [npm-shrinkwrap](#).

### Clarity integration issues:

- Closing a modal with X or Escape can lead to problems with HTML Client 6.5 (fixed in Fling 3.6, or SDK 6.5u1).
- Wizards require css adjustments. The title must be hidden in plugin mode. Also, the wizard content will scroll within the modal dialog box unless you use HTML Client 6.5u1 or higher.

### SDK issues:

- (Plugin mode) Delete menu is not implemented yet in the Chassis list view. Also Edit and Add chassis actions don't refresh the view.
- (Plugin mode) In the chassis summary view the Edit button doesn't work but the Edit menu action does. However the Edit menu action doesn't refresh the content of the summary view.

### Test issues:

- PhantomJS is no longer included because it is not supported with newer npm packages. Instead we plan on using [Headless Chrome](#) in a future version of plugin-seed.

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## FAQ

### What versions of vSphere Client is plugin-seed compatible with?

vSphere Web Client (Flex) 6.0 and 6.5.x, vSphere HTML Client 6.5.x

Note that a [UI-only plugin](#) is also compatible with vSphere Web Client 5.5.1 as long as it doesn't use new JS APIs such as `OpenModalDialog`.

### Do I have to maintain two apps with this approach, one for standalone and one for plugin mode?



No. You are building only one application, which can run either in dev mode during development and plugin mode once deployed with vSphere Client.

### Can I re-use only parts of the generated plugin if I don't need all the features?

Yes, feel free to remove what you don't need from the `src/` directory. You can also treat the generated plugin as a template containing many different patterns and tools, and copy what you like in another project.

See [Removing code that you don't need](#) above for removing specific features.

### Should I use plugin-seed if I am not interested in the hybrid mode approach?

You can pick and choose the tools and patterns that can help you in your development, and remove the logic dealing with dev mode. Here is a list of patterns and best practices included in plugin-seed:

- The use of [Observables](#) in services and components. The use of Angular [async](#) pipe.
- The lazy loading optimization to minimize the code loaded in each plugin view
- The `app-alert.component` for standard use notifications
- The common `AppErrorHandler`
- The `RefreshService`
- The `i18nService`
- The `NavService`
- The initialization of a global `webPlatform` object without using `web-platform.js`
- The `WebPlatform` type for TypeScript
- The injection of modal components
- Using mock data with `json-server` or with [angular-in-memory-web-api](#)
- Using the [http-proxy-servlet](#) in place of Java services to access backend APIs.
- End to end tests using Protractor to login to vSphere Client and test a running plugin.

See also [Developing without standalone dev mode](#) above.

### Doesn't the dev mode approach add code that should not run in production?

The dev mode code is never executed when the plugin run inside vSphere Client because the runtime flag `pluginMode` is true (this is independant of the build type and [production optimizations](#)). The size of dev UI components is fairly small so it doesn't impact your plugin's overall size.

### Can I use SystemJS or WebPack instead of Angular-CLI?

Angular-CLI includes WebPack already but if you prefer to use just [WebPack](#) directly or if you prefer [SystemJS](#) you have several choices:

1. Use the generated plugin and change the build system yourself.
2. Start from the [Clarity Seed](#) version that uses WebPack or SystemJS, and add the code back.
3. Look at the [SDK Fling](#) sample `custom-object` that uses SystemJS

### How can I use newer Clarity components?

Check the current state of [Clarity components](#) and their [release notes](#), then bump the Clarity versions in `package.json`. Note that Clarity npm packages uses the same semantic version as most other packages,

starting with a caret ^. For instance ^0.9.14 means that newer versions 0.9.15, 0.9.16, etc. will be picked up automatically because they should not introduce any breaking change.

```
"clarity-angular": "^0.9.14",  
"clarity-icons": "^0.9.14",  
"clarity-ui": "^0.9.14",
```

### Can I use another UX framework in place of, or in addition to Clarity?

Sure. Plugin-seed uses only [Clarity components](#) because it is the best way to be consistent with the HTML Client, but other [Angular UI components libraries](#) are available. It should be possible to combine multiple libraries as long as there is no CSS name conflict. If you end up using other components in addition to Clarity components please send us feedback!

### Can I build a plugin without any Java services since the UI calls backend Restful APIs?

Yes, see [Building a plugin without any Java service](#).

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## References

- [vSphere Client SDK 6.5 Documentation](#)
- [vSphere Client SDK blogs](#)
- Angular's [Quickstart](#) and [Tutorial](#)
- [Clarity Design System](#)
- [Typescript language](#)
- [Angular-CLI](#)
- [Json-server](#)
- [Jasmine test framework](#)
- [Protractor](#)

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## Feedback Welcome!

Your feedback is very important to us! You can report problems or ask questions in the [vSphere Web Client SDK forum](#). Please do not use private emails unless your question contains confidential data, or if you want to reply to the survey below privately.

Thanks!

The vSphere Client team.