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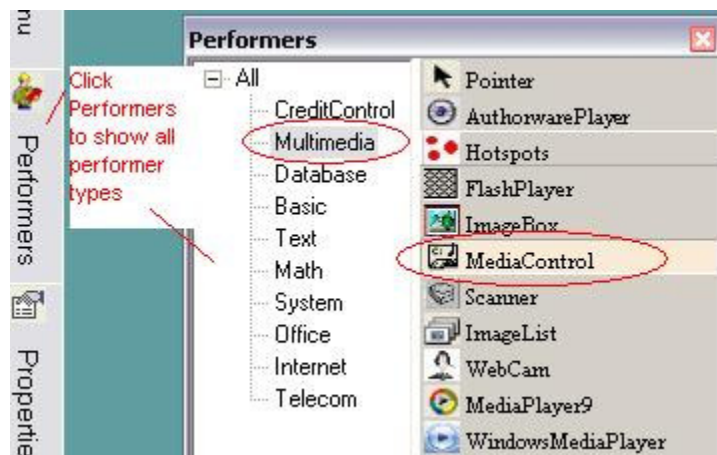
Lesson 3. Use Performers without UI

In this lesson, we are going to add background music to a page. We are going to use MediaControl performer, which does not have a user interface on the page. For playing background music, we do not need a user interface.

Actually, there are many performers which do not have a user interface. For example, CoinAcceptor accepts coins and can be used to control your program; Smartcard lets you use smart card to control your program; Timer allows you to schedule different tasks; Math Expression can be used to carry out various mathematical tasks; TextMaker allows you to form dynamic text; Phone Dialer allows users to dial preset phone numbers; SendMail sends out emails; FTPClient allows your program to upload and download files via FTP, and etc. All these performers do not need a user interface for end users to control them. But at design time, we need to “see” these performers so that we can do programming on them. These runtime invisible performers will appear in a separate window at design time.

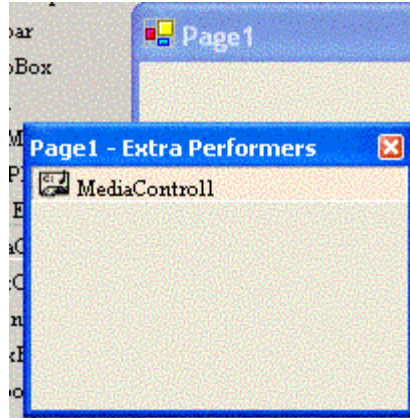
3.1. Use MediaControl

Click on “Performers” to bring up all the performers currently available and select MediaControl:



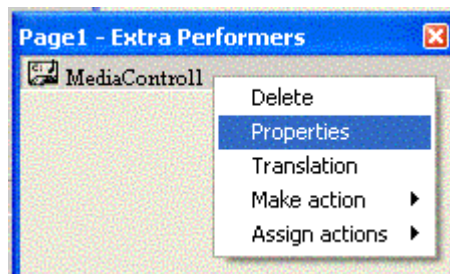
Drag and drop the MediaControl onto the page. A MediaControl performer is created and it belongs to the page.

Because the MediaControl performer does not have a user interface, it will not appear on the page. A separate window called “Extra Performers” window appears which lists all the performers without UI that belongs to the page.

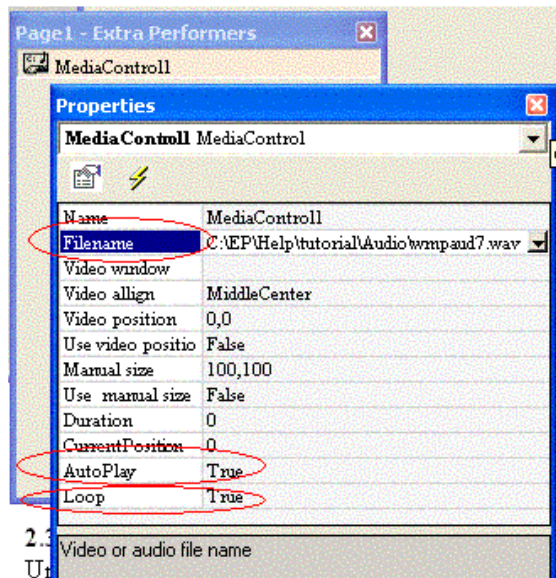


3.2. Set properties

In the Extra Performers window, right-click on MediaControl performer; select Properties:



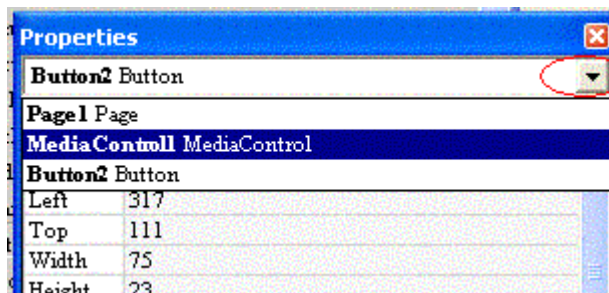
The Properties window appears:



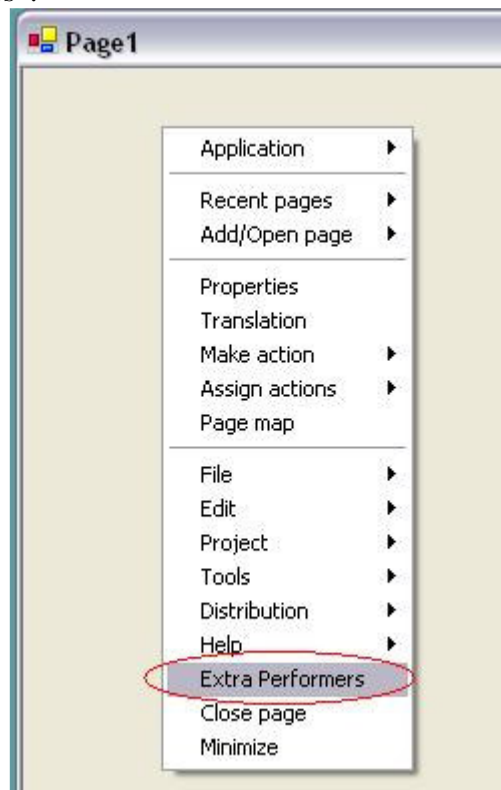
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Set the Filename property to a music file, set AutoPlay to True, and set Loop to True. When property AutoPlay is True the MediaControl performer will automatically start playing the music file indicated by the Filename property. When property Loop is True the MediaControl performer will start playing the music file again when the playing finishes. So, with these two properties both being True, the music will start when the page is opened and the music will play again and again, never end, acting as a background music.

If the Extra Performers window is closed, you cannot right-click on MediaControl to bring up its properties. In this case, you can bring up the Properties window for the page first by right-click on the page and select “Properties”. Then you can access the properties of the MediaControl through the drop-down list on the top of the properties window:



You may also bring the Extra Performers window back by right-clicking on the page and choose “Extra Performers”:



Now when the page is displayed, the music will start to play again and again as long as the page is not closed. Press F2 to try it.

MediaControl can also be used to play videos. It can display the video on any other performers which has a user interface, like Picture box, Label, Button, etc. You can set “Video window” property to the performer you want the video to be displayed on it.

3.3. What we learned in this lesson

- Some performers do not have a user interface (UI) on the page at runtime. When you use such performers, they are listed in an Extra Performers window at design time.
- You can access these performers’ properties through the Extra Performers window or through the drop-down list of the page’s properties window.

3.4. Exercises

Exercise1.

Make the background music play only once, not play it again and again.

Hint: set the Loop property to False.

Exercise2:

Make a button and there is a video playing on it.

Hint: Set the “Video window” property of the MediaControl performer to the button:

