

VIRTUAL APPLICATION PACKAGING

BEST-PRACTICE GUIDE

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Introduction

Transforming a standard Windows application into a virtual application is called “packaging”. The packaging process itself consists of 3 steps: first, the pre-snapshot step: a snapshot of the machine, files and registry keys is taken. The next step is software installation and configuration. Last, the post-snapshot step: a final snapshot is taken, and a package is built from the difference between the post and the pre-snapshot. This document guides through a complete software installation capture. Note that for simple applications, the [Online Packager](#) can often be used as a simpler replacement to these steps.

Part 1: Installation Capture

Simple applications (not requiring any special software configuration / pre-requisite components / reboot):

1. Prepare a clean, basic virtual machine. Make sure no unnecessary programs run on it. Turn off all possible updates, including Windows Updates or anti-virus updates. Avoid using other programs on your machine. In general, anything that can modify files or registry keys, will interfere with the packaging process. We recommend using XP SP3 32-bit, unless your software requires some higher systems to install & function.
2. Start Cameyo, choose “Capture an installation”. Wait until Cameyo tells you to install your software.
3. Install the software you wish to package.
4. Click the “Install Done” button.

Complex applications (advanced capture):

1. Prepare a clean, basic virtual machine. Make sure no unnecessary programs run on it. Turn off all possible updates, including Windows Updates or anti-virus updates. Avoid using other programs on your machine. In general, anything that can modify files or registry keys, will interfere with the packaging process.
2. On a clean virtual machine, take a snapshot so that you can revert back to it. Since mistakes can happen during installation and configuration, it is important to be able to restart the operations.
3. On the machine, make sure you have all the prerequisites for the installation.
4. Open Windows’ Run dialog and enter: “Cameyo.exe -StartCapture”.
5. Install the application(s) you wish to package. Configure them appropriately.
6. Open Windows’ Run dialog and enter: “Cameyo.exe -EndCapture”. This will take the post-snapshot and build the virtual application.

Avoid uninstalling software or modules after step 4.

Part 2: Package Testing

1. Take your resulting package and test it on a different machine, similar to the target machines you intend to run it on.

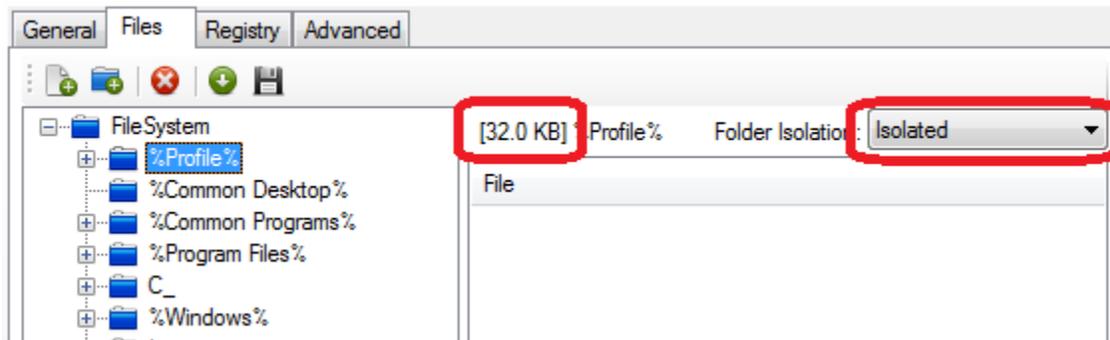
2. If you followed the “Advanced capture” scenario, you can always go back to your capture virtual machine where the application is installed and modify your software’s configuration or add additional components. You can then repeat step the “-EndCapture” operation as many times as needed to re-generate the package.

Part 3: Package Optimization and Fine-Tuning (optional)

Take the resulting package onto your work machine, and edit it using Cameyo’s Package Editor. Make sure to keep the original package as well, in case you make a mistake when editing the package.

Here are some useful items to check in the Package Editor:

- Application ID: has to be a short descriptive name that serves as a unique inventory name for the application. This ID will have to remain the same for future versions of this same application.
- Startup: lets you edit the startup menu, if the application contains several startup shortcuts.
- Virtualization mode: RAM mode does not extract the application files on disk. Hence it has a smaller footprint. Disk mode extracts application’s files, and is hence faster for applications that need to be re-used often on the same machine and where disk size isn’t an issue.
- Files (tab): by clicking on a folder on the left side, you can see its overall size (including sub-directories) and eliminate temporary or unneeded folders. You can also remove the “Logs” folder once the package is tested & running. Screenshot shown below.
- Files (tab): you can also set the isolation mode of each folder individually.



Using the licensed version of the Package Editor, you can also edit advanced settings such as [custom events](#), package protection & expiration, auto update and more.