FlipFactory®

UPDATING ACCOUNTS AND FACTORIES

This App Note applies to versions 6.0 & later

Updating Accounts & Factories

Synopsis

New versions of FlipFactory include feature changes to many Flip Engine components for factories, and their settings – monitors, codecs, and destinations, for example. These changed components often require changes to the Manage Factories console's editor panels because the new version has controls that have been removed, changed, or added.

Prior to FlipFactory version 6.1, factories that were created in previous versions did not update editor panels for new, revised, or eliminated components. This required users to manually rebuild factories during an update in order to display the current editor panel correctly and provide the current feature set for each updated component.

Beginning in FlipFactory version 6.1, Update Pack 1, each time you log onto an account, each component of your factories are examined and compared to the current components in the updated Flip Engine. When one or more components in the factory is obsolete, the factory name displays in red text.

The Account Update feature reduces the effort required to update factories and reduces potential errors introduced during manual factory creation. The Account Update feature advises users of obsolete factories and enables you to upgrade the entire account or individual factories, providing more flexibility to control accounts and factories.

The Account Update feature also includes the ability to automatically update all accounts (Automatically Updating All Accounts on page 5) without human intervention. During an upgrade or account import, you can figure FlipFactory to automatically upgrade all accounts, depending on your requirements.

Note: *If your Manage Factories console displays factories in red, you should update the factory. After updating, be sure to test the factory for correct configuration and satisfactory processing and output before using the factory in production.*
When Automatic Updating is enabled in Advanced Settings, the manual method of updating accounts and factories is superseded.

How FlipFactory Stores Accounts and Factory Settings

Factory settings in FlipFactory are stored directly in the FlipFactory database. Factories are organized by account. In addition, an XML-based file of the account and its factories is saved when you export it for archive purposes, or to use it for importing into another FlipFactory. The same XML file is also created when you update an account, for archive purposes. This file is not used by FlipFactory for any other reason.

The exported account XML files are used as archives and for importing into other FlipFactory databases.

To learn about exporting and importing these account files, see the FlipFactory User's Guide, Chapter 10, Database Implementations and Operations.

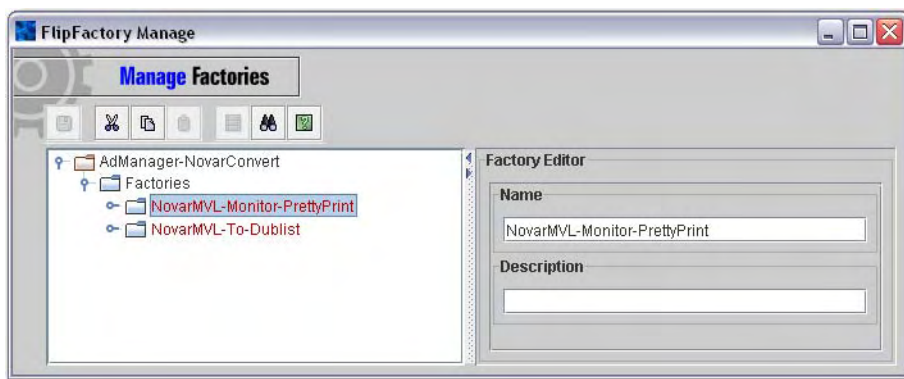# Updating Your Accounts and Factories

Note: Before updating factories, you should disable their monitors or stop submitting jobs and let them all complete. After you update an account or factory and you click Save on the Manage Factories window, new jobs will use the updated specifications of the factories affected.

When you install a new version of FlipFactory, feature changes in factory components often include changes to the editor panel of the Manage Factories window. Changes may include obsolete controls that don't display, controls that have been changed in some way – new options in a dropdown menu, or a check box changed to a radio button.

Changes may also occur when a component in a factory no longer exists in the new version of FlipFactory. For example, a codec may be replaced by a new codec of similar functionality. The object in the selector panel can't be linked to the new codec, so the object itself is removed from the factory, and is no longer displayed in the factory selection panel on the left. In this case, during post-update review, you'll need to add the new component back in to the factory and configure it properly for your workflow requirements.

FlipFactory's Account Update runs each time you log onto an account. It examines factories that should be updated to accurately and completely permit configuration. To alert you that the editor panel requires updating, the names of factories that require updating display in red.
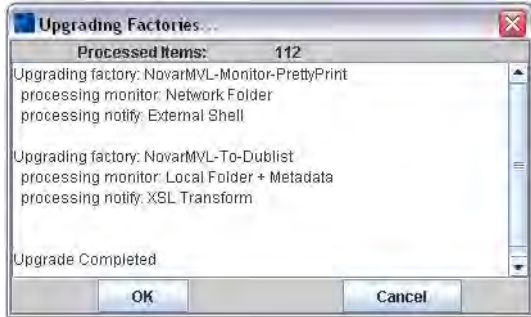
Figure 1. Obsolete factories display in red in the Manage Factories window.

To update these factories, click on the factory to select it. Next, right-click the factory and select Update from the dropdown menu to update the selected factory.

Or if more than one factory is obsolete, click on the Factory icon to select it. Next, right-click the Factory icon again and select Update Factories from the dropdown menu to update all factories in the account. FlipFactory displays the following window:

Figure 2. FlipFactory displays Updating Factories, a process window with details.

Updating may take a few minutes, depending on the number and complexity of the factories. When updating is complete, this dialog displays:
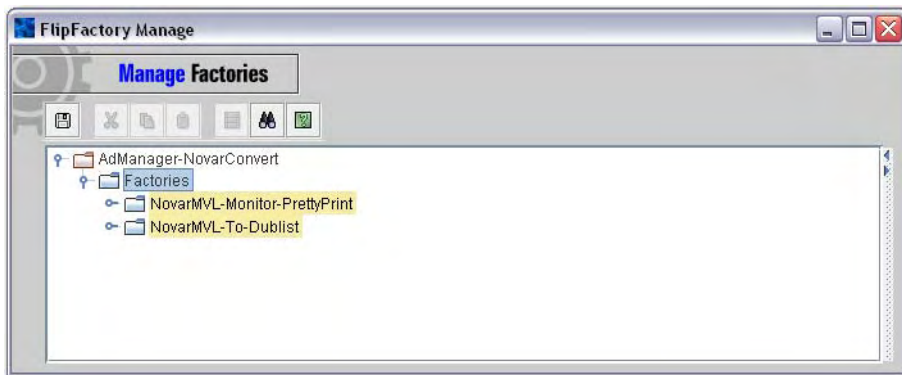
Figure 3. FlipFactory notifies you that the update is complete.

Click OK to close the dialog. Click Cancel to discard changes made to the factories or click OK to close the window.

When the update is complete, the factory or factories that have been updated display in yellow. You should review the settings and do a sanity check to make sure the settings are correct and review any new settings for the component.

Figure 4. After updating, factories display in yellow – save them to display in black again.

Click Save to update the account. You can close the Manage Factories window without saving to revert to your previous settings. The pre-update accounts are saved in Program Files\ Telestream\FlipFactory\XML\accounts\backup directory. Submit sample jobs and review output carefully to make sure it meets your requirements.

Updated factories display their factory name in black, and they are ready for use after normal update testing procedures have been performed satisfactorily.

Automatically Updating All Accounts

Telestream recommends that you interactively update your accounts and factories, so that you can better manage the process. However, if you want to automatically – and without human intervention – update all accounts and factories on a FlipFactory server after performing a FlipFactory version upgrade or when accounts are imported, you can enable this feature in the System Settings Window.

Note: It is important to note that when you enable automatic account updates, the FlipEngine service does not start until this process is complete. During this time, if you launch the console, it won't connect to the FlipEngine server. The time it takes is directly related to the volume of accounts and factories. Be sure to view the engine0.log file occasionally in NotePad to determine that the FlipEngine has started. (You can use WinTail instead of NotePad to monitor your log file continually, and display log entries as they are written.)

To enable automatic account updates, follow these steps:

1. After logging on, display System Settings > Advanced Settings.

2. Under Automatic Account Update, check to (on FlipEngine startup) parse existing or newly-imported accounts and upgrade them with the current options and settings.

3. Save the settings and close the window and console.

4. Restart the FlipEngine service.

With the Automatic Update setting enabled, the Flip Engine updates all factories in all accounts as part of its startup tasks.

Before making any changes, FlipFactory saves an archive XML account file in C:\Program Files\Telestream\FlipFactory\XML\Accounts\backup, with a timestamp. You can revert to this archived account at any time – see the FlipFactory User's Guide for details on importing accounts.

Note: When you enable automatic account updates, end users will never see factories displayed in red in their Manage Factories window, because all accounts are automatically updated at startup time.

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FlipFactory has been designed for professionals skilled in the art of digital media transformation and workflow automation, to facilitate the automation of complex media operations and workflow that require a multitude of input and output media formats, delivery to numerous types of media devices and file systems, and notification of media systems including broadcast automation systems and media asset management systems.

The FlipFactory architecture and user interface is designed to provide maximum flexibility in the setup and configuration of these complex media transformations and workflow. In providing this high degree of flexibility, it is possible for media transformation and workflow processes to be configured that are impractical, likely to result in unexpected or unintended results, or beyond the limits of FlipFactory to perform satisfactorily. Additionally, FlipFactory may be executed on a platform that lacks the performance or capacity to perform the media transformations and workflow you've configured, which is your responsibility to specify. Telestream has chosen to implement FlipFactory to provide the greatest flexibility without limiting its functionality to only those transformations and workflow that are known with certainty to be within its performance capabilities, including those limits imposed by the platform upon which you have installed FlipFactory.

Therefore, you acknowledge that you may create transformations and workflow that are impractical or beyond your FlipFactory installation's limits, and Telestream does not warrant that each transformation or workflow you specify or use will complete without error.

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