Smartsign Player Overview

System requirements

Please consult the technical specifications

Antivirus Software

Antivirus Software can cause performance issues. To lessen the load on the Player PC, add the Player-temp folder to the exception list for real time scanning.

Instructions to locate the temp-folder:

1. Run "Smartsign Player X Configuration"
2. Open the tab "Configuration"
3. "Temp directory" holds the path to the temp folder. To open it, select and copy the path, and paste it in the address bar of an explorer window. In this folder, Smartsign Player will create files and folders when running. And if real time scanning is enabled, the slowdown can create flicker or black screens.

It is recommended that you schedule a scan in this directory at a time when no-one sees the screen.

Choosing a graphics card

Smartsign Player don´t usually require more graphics power than a modern integrated graphics card.

However, compared to motherboard built in graphics circuits, dedicated graphic cards generally produce a better picture quality. For that reason they should be considered. Also, if the screen is intended to be in portrait mode, the graphics card drivers must support this.

Another reason to consider a dedicated graphics card is when high resolution video will be shown.

Microsoft Windows Embedded

Usually Smartsign Player runs on systems with Windows Embedded, even flash disk based systems. However, since the Windows configuration on those systems are left to the manufacturers and suppliers to decide we cannot guarantee that it will work. Therefore embedded systems are usually not supported but we are happy to give you advice.

Computers are different

We do extensive testing on different operating systems, different hardware platforms and multiple network setups. Since the number of different computers on the market are vast and the number of possible system configurations are almost endless we are unable to test every combination. Sometimes Smartsign Player just doesn't run or behaves strangely, even when the system requirements have been fulfilled. When this happens, please contact us and let us help you find a solution.
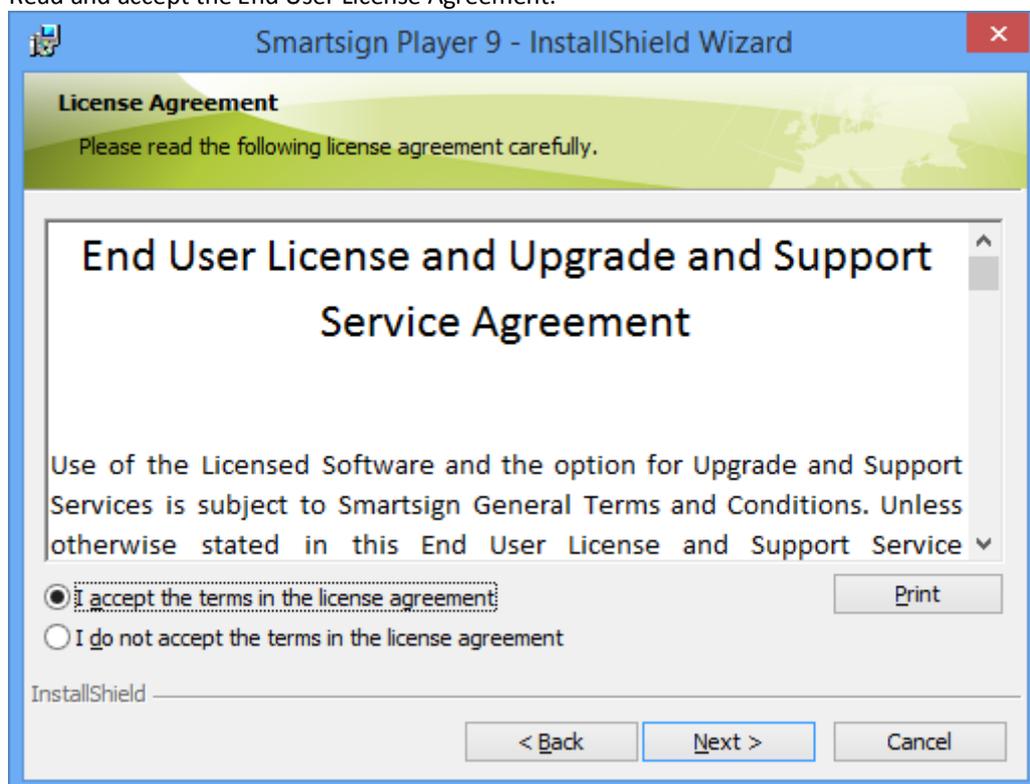
Smartsign Player Installation

Start the installer

Start the installation by double clicking the .msi-file and follow the instructions.
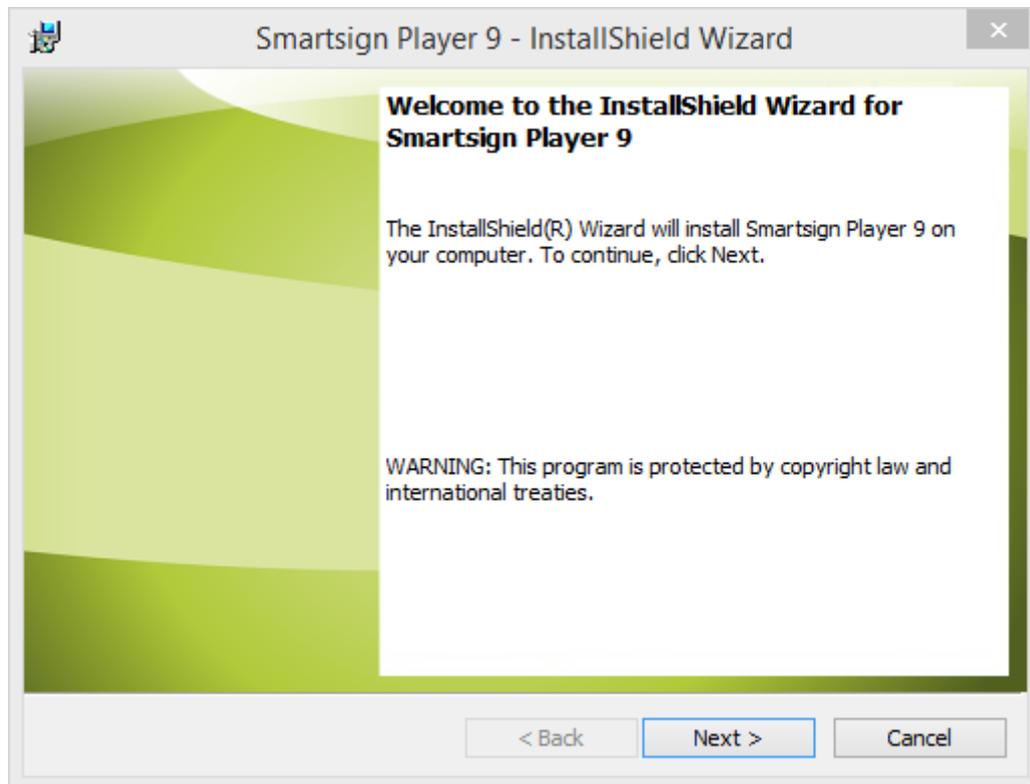

Read and accept the End User License Agreement.

Installation folder

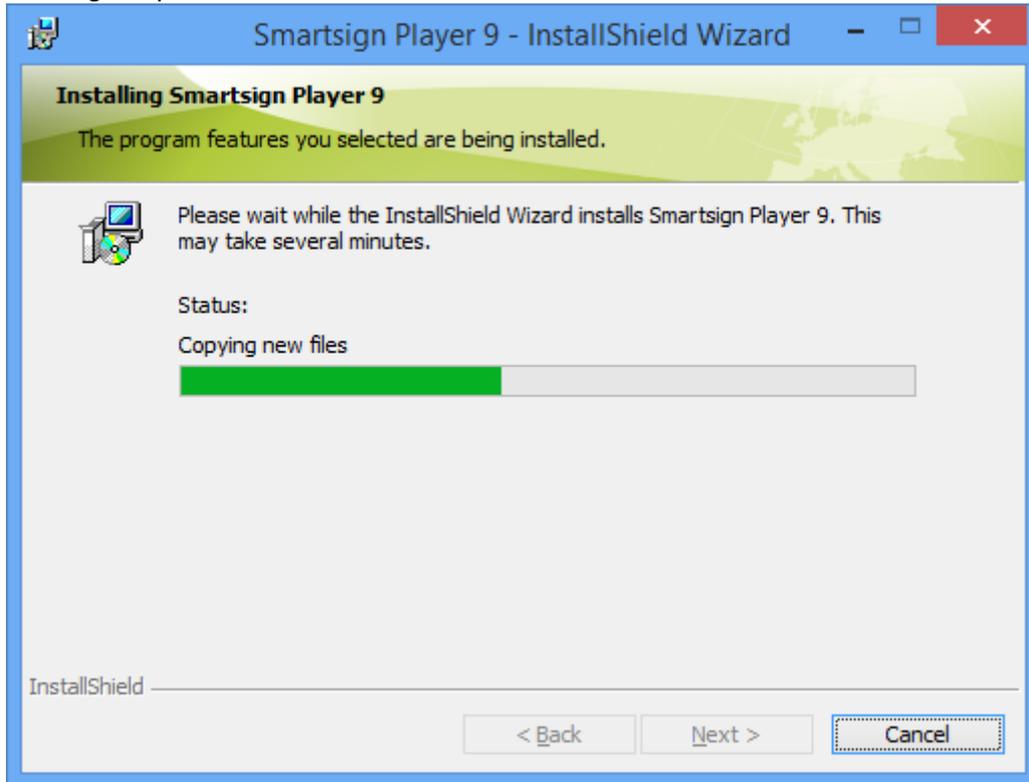You can optionally choose another location for the application files.

NOTE: you can change the location of the media files after the install running Player Configuration. This may be beneficial on for example embedded PC:s with limited disk space on the system drive.
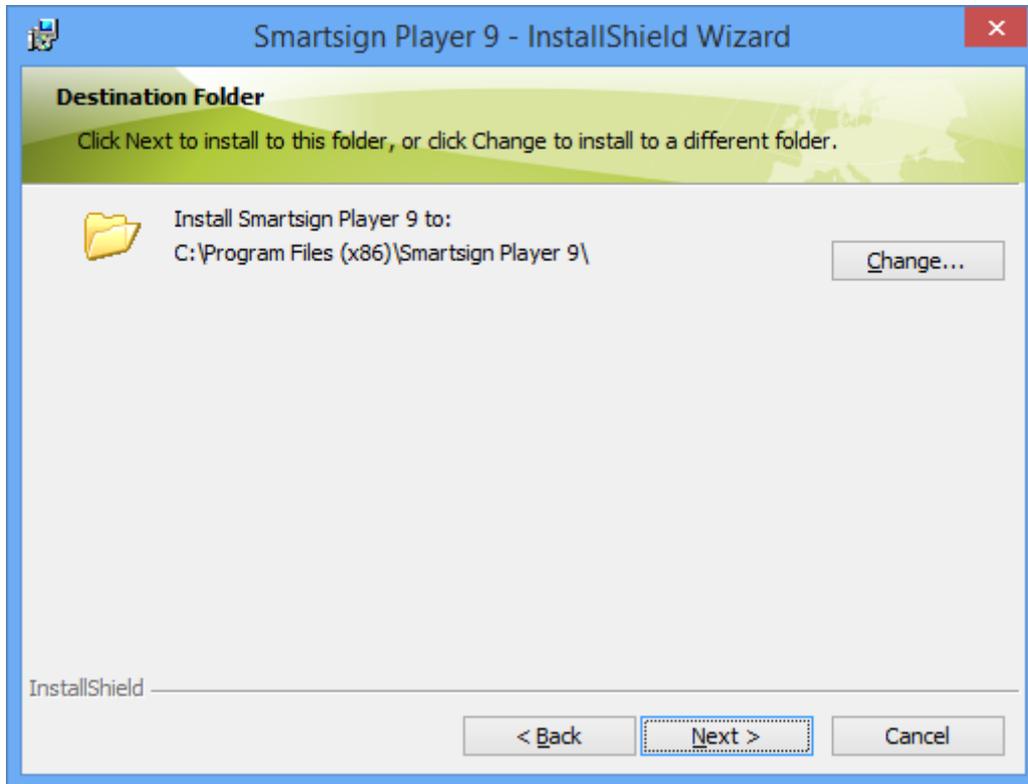
Summary. Click Install if you are happy with your choices.
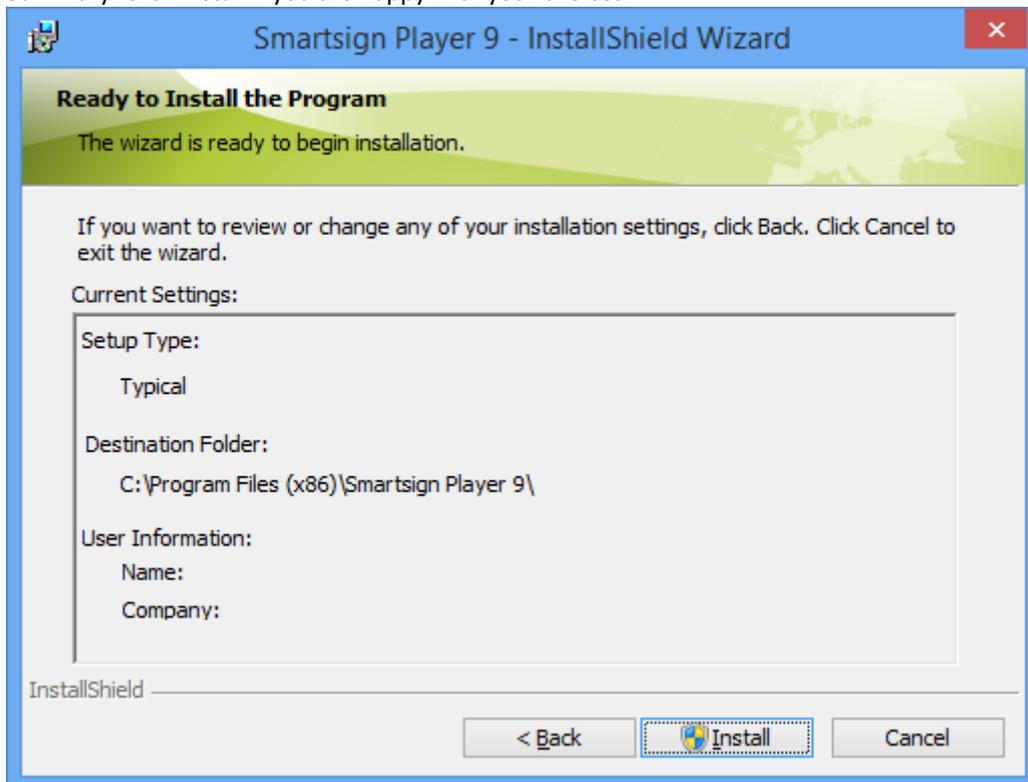
Smartsign Player will now install.

In the last step you have the choice to configure the basic settings of the player. Just click Finish if you wish to do so. Otherwise uncheck the box and then click Finish.

Server Connection

If you choose to start Player Configuration you will be presented with the below dialog. You probably only need to replace the IP address with the IP- address or DNS-name of the computer running Smartsign Server.

You may also input a name for the player and change where the player will store its' media files, logs and other temporary files.

Always click verify connection before saving.

Install recommended software

After installing Smartsign Player, we recommend you to upgrade Adobe flash to latest version, and also upgrade Internet Explorer to version 9 (or later).
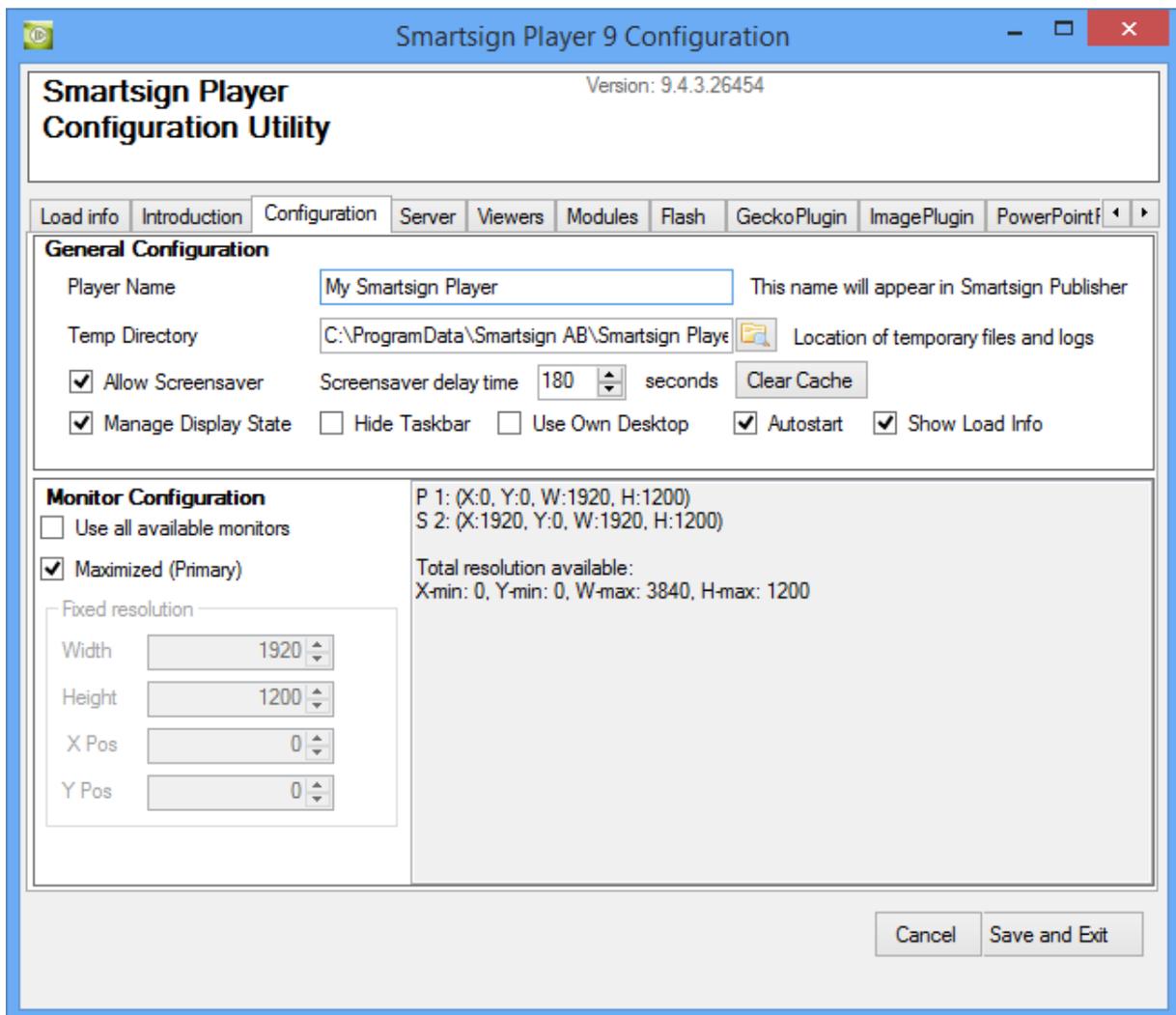
Smartsign Player Configuration

If you run Smartsign Player Configuration from the start menu after installation you will get the full configuration dialog.

Step through all sections, follow the instructions and perform each test. It is important that all viewers (you want to use) have been successfully tested.

Tab Configuration

The configuration view is split in two parts, one for general configuration and one for monitor configuration. All of this is set to default so you only need to make changes here if you want to customize the Player installation.

Configuration settings

Player Name The name of this Smartsign Player. This is the name that will appear in Smartsign Publisher so it's recommended to use different names for the Players.

Temp Directory The Smartsign Player will store temporary data in this directory. For example: media, logs and cache.

Allow Screensaver Optional if the Smartsign Player should allow screensaver when there is no more media to show.

Screensaver delay time Delay before the screensaver will start after last shown media. (if screensaver is activated)

Manage Display State If true, Smartsign Player will control the display(s) sleep mode. If false, all power savings are left to the operating system.

Hide Taskbar If true, Smartsign Player will hide the taskbar in Windows. (only viable if "Use Own Desktop" is not checked) **(Recommended)**

Use Own Desktop If true, Smartsign Player will use its own Desktop in Windows. This feature is not recommended to use on low end hardware.

Autostart If true, Smartsign Player will start automatically after logon. **(Recommended)**

Show load info If true, Smartsign player will show a small status bar at the top left corner. It will show connection status and information regarding downloading playlists and media files. If Smartsign Player has no connection to Smartsign Server the bar will be visible until connection is re-established. In normal use the status bar will fade away after 7 seconds of inactivity. **(Recommended on new installations)**

Monitor Configuration

Use all available monitors

Check this to make this Player use all available monitors on this computer. If there are multiple monitors connected, the Player will use them all as one large screen.

Maximized

If not using all available monitors this checkbox can be used to make the player use all available space on the PRIMARY monitor on this computer.

Fixed Resolution – Width

The width in pixels of the display area used by this Player. Use the information to the right to set this.

Fixed Resolution – Height

The height in pixels of the display area used by this Player. Use the information to the right to set this.
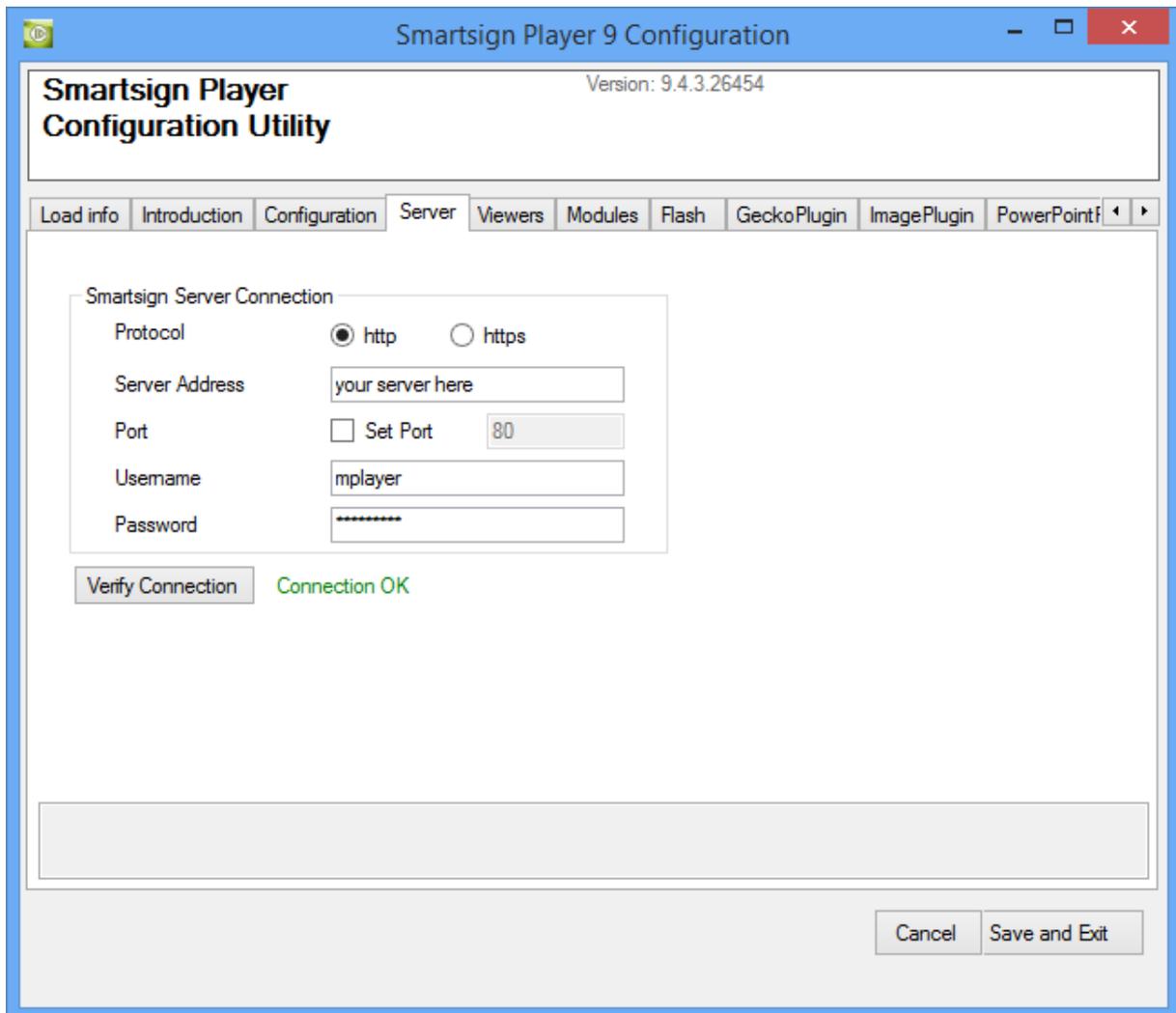
Fixed Resolution – X Pos

The x position of the upper left corner of the display area used by this Player. The coordinate system is (0,0) in the upper left corner of the screen and increases down towards right.

Fixed Resolution – Y Pos

The y position of the upper left corner of the display area used by this Player. The coordinate system is (0,0) in the upper left corner of the screen and increases down towards right.

Server Tab

By default Smartsign Player will connect to Smartsign Cloud Server, with the url cloud.smartsign.se. Please change this to the correct IP Address if you have installed your own Smartsign Server. If you have installed Smartsign Server on the same computer as Smartsign Player, you should change IP Address to "localhost" or "127.0.0.1". Always verify the connection after changing the server connection settings but note that Smartsign Server has to be running to do this. Default username for the Player to access the server is "mplayer" with the password "SmartSign".

Viewers

Smartsign Player uses different Viewers to display media on the computer and each Viewer need a plugin to work. If a plugin is disabled or not working, that media type will not play if booked.

Viewer	Plugin	Media type	File extension	Special computer requirement
ContentPackage	ContentPackage	ContentPackage (ZWF)	.zwf	Adobe Flash installed. (latest version recommended)
Flash	FlashPlugin	Flash (self-starting)	.swf	Adobe Flash installed. (latest version recommended)
Image	ImagePlugin	Images	.jpg .png .gif	
PDF	PDF	PDF	.pdf	(will be displayed as images)
Powerpoint	PPTViewer	MS PowerPoint Presentations	.ppt .pptx	(will be displayed as images)
RSS	RSSFlash	Live RSS Feed	A rss link (http://di.se/rss/)	Adobe Flash installed. (latest version recommended)
URL	WebbrowserPlugin	Web pages	A webpage link (www.smartsign.se)	IE7 or later installed. (IE9 or later recommended) Adobe Flash recommended.
Video	VLCPlugin	Video	.mpg .mpeg .wmv .avi .vob .flv .mkv .mov .mp2 .mp4 .mpeg1 .mpeg2 .mpeg4	
Sound	VLCPlugin	Sound	.aac .ac3 .flac .mp3 .ogg .wav .wma .xm	

If you are experiencing problems, it is recommended that you go through all plugins and test them all. If a test fails, first action is to test it again.
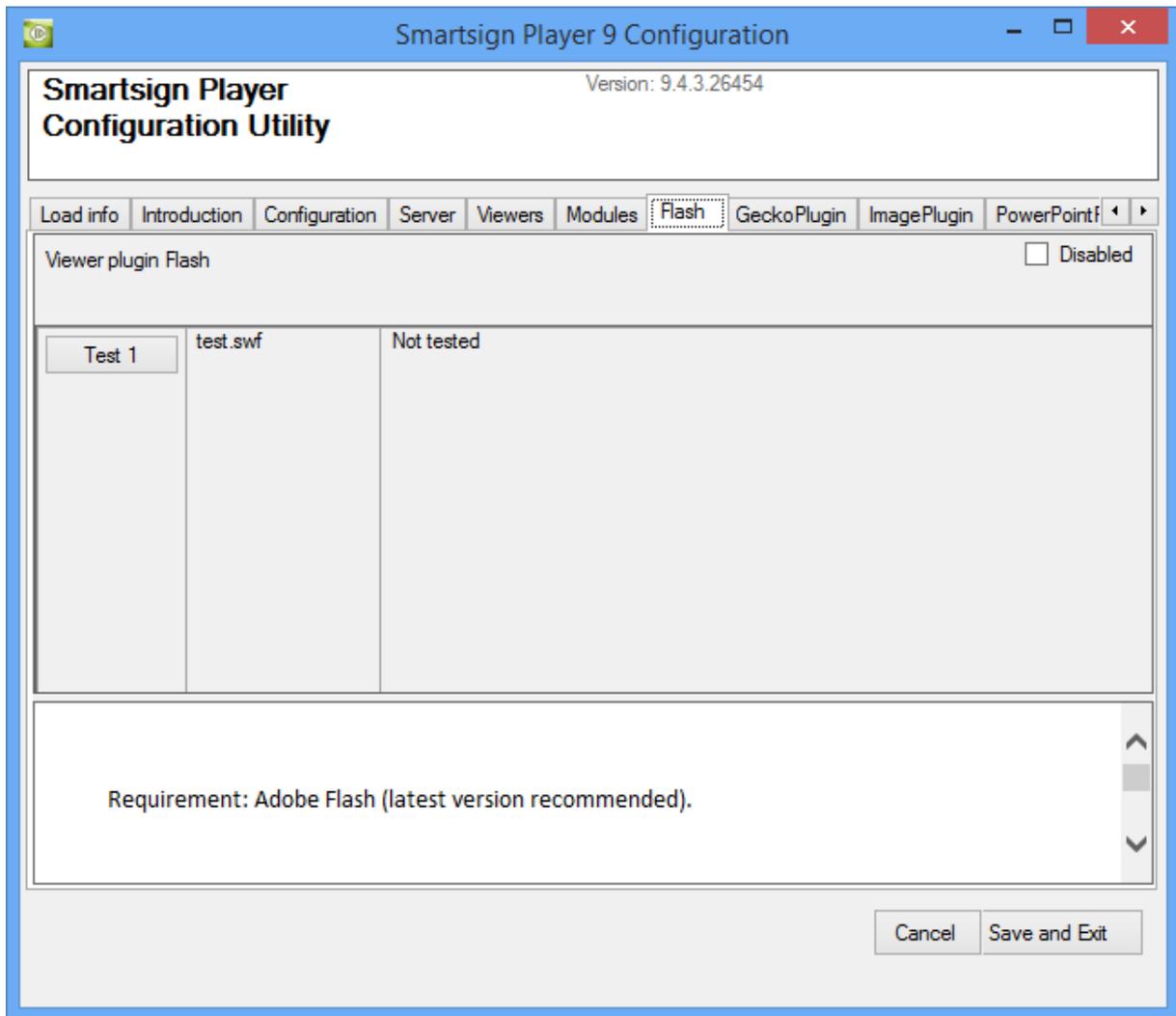
Image 1: This plugin is not yet tested. Test it by clicking the Test 1 button. All tests must be done before the plugin is verified to work. It's possible to disable the plugin by checking the upper right checkbox.
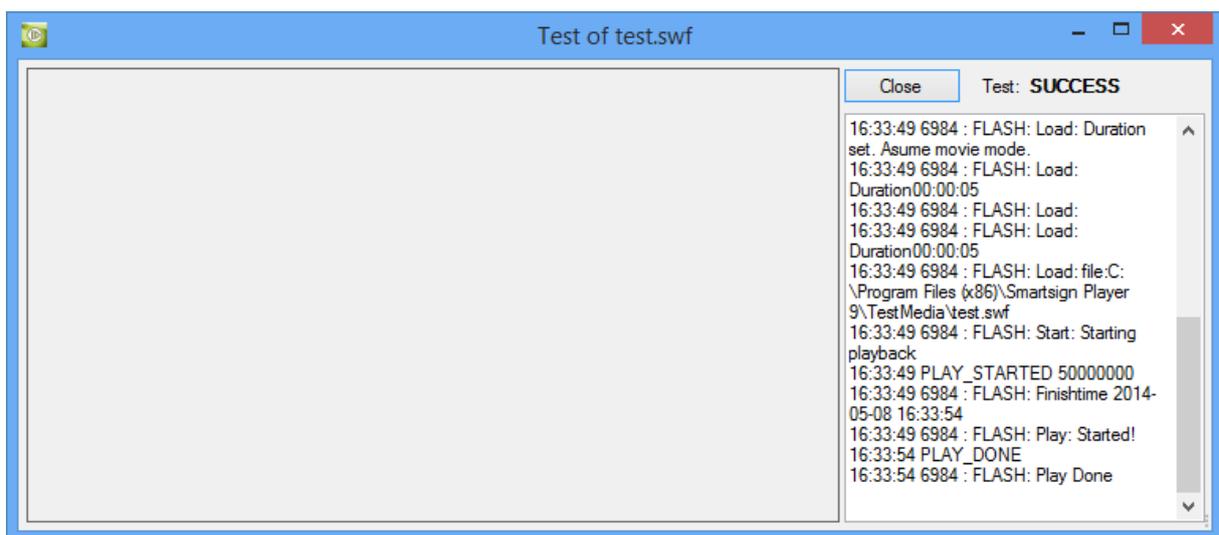

Image 2: The test will run for about a minute. When done it should read "SUCCESS".

Adobe Flash

Normally Adobe Flash Player is already installed. Smartsign recommend to get the latest Flash Player from http://www.adobe.com/flash

> NOTE: Always verify that Flash can play in Internet Explorer before trying it in Smartsign Player.

Internet Explorer

When installing a new version of IE or on new computer you have to run the setup (this is done by simple opening an Internet Explorer Window) for Internet Explorer before starting Smartsign Player. The setup will show a "Welcome message" and maybe ask for "search provider settings". All this has to be done before Smartsign Player can utilize the browser.

> NOTE: Smartsign Player uses the installed version of Internet explorer to render html-pages. This will affect the look of some pages since no version of IE follows the web-standard. Internet Explorer 9 is currently recommended.

Advanced Options

The **Smartsign logo** is displayed when nothing else is scheduled to play. This can either be entirely disabled or replaced. To replace it, locate the file screensaver.png in "C:\Program Files\Smartsign Player" and put another .png file there with the same name.

Smartsign Player always keeps a local copy of all files and schedules to make it start quicker and to be able to run even when the Smartsign server is not available. Clearing this cache will force the Smartsign Player to download all contents from the Smartsign Server again. You can manually clear this cache from Player Configuration or by deleting all content in the following directory (if using default temp path):

%PROGRAMDATA%\Smartsign AB\Smartsign Player

Supported Video Formats

Smartsign Player uses Videolan VLC (version depends on Smartsign Player version) to display video. All video supported by VLC should work in Smartsign Player but these are the video formats we officially support:

- Flash Video - FLV1, 480p, 10 Mbps
- H264 – MPEG4 AVC, 720p, 10 Mbps
- H264 – MPEG4, 1080p, 20 Mbps
- MPEG-1/2, 480p, 5 Mbps
- MPEG-4 - XVID, 480p, 10 Mbps
- MPEG-4 Video, 480p, 10 Mbps
- WMA2, 720p, 20 Mbps
- WMV1, 720p, 20 Mbps
- WMV3, 720p, 20 Mbps
- WMV VC1, 1080p, 20 Mbps

Note that playback quality depends on hardware.

Power Options

The computers power options are accessible from

Start -> Control panel -> Power options

It is recommended that both computer standby and hibernation are completely disabled.

It is possible to take advantage of Windows ability to turn off the monitor when nothing is scheduled to be shown. When Smartsign Player is running and showing media it prevents the computer from activating any screensaver and also from entering any power save mode. However, when nothing is scheduled to be shown, Smartsign Player will let the computer's screensaver activate and will let the computer turn off the monitor if this has been configured.
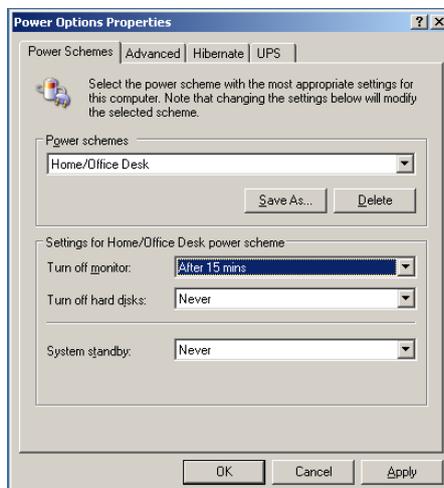
The above example will turn off the monitor after 15 minutes of Smartsign Player "inactivity".

NOTE! When Smartsign Player is installed as a screensaver this feature is not available. Smartsign Player will naturally never prevent the windows screensaver to activate.

Disable Error reporting

Error reporting is used to inform the user of any failing program. For stability Smartsign Player uses external processes to run media content. If a corrupt media is started the running process may fail but not Smartsign Player. To avoid the standard Error reporting popup do the following.

For windows XP / 2003

Open System Properties. Click advanced tab and then Error Reporting
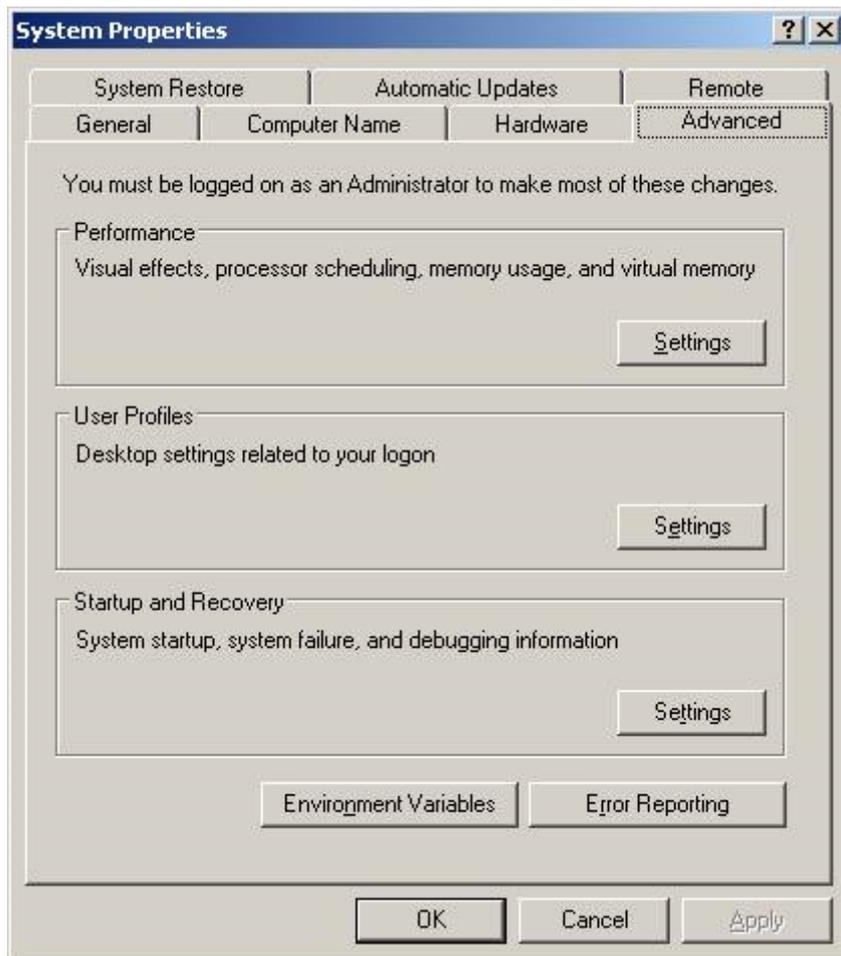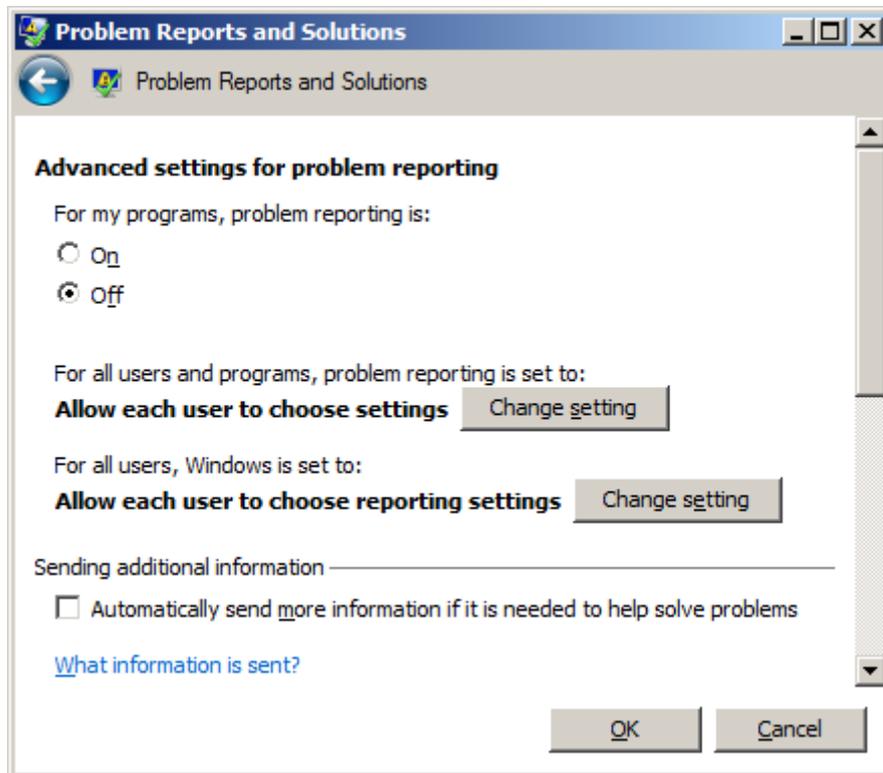
Disable Error Reporting. Click Ok.

Windows Vista / 2008

- Open Control Panel
- Open Problem Reports & solutions
- Click Change Settings.
- Click Advanced Settings

Windows 7

To disable Error Reporting, open Local Group Policy Editor by typing gpedit.msc in the Start Search and hit Enter. Navigate to Computer Configuration > Administrative Templates > Systems > Internet Communication Management > Internet Communication Settings from the left sidebar. Obviously you must have administrator privilege before making any changes. From the main window, select Turn Off Windows Error Reporting and Enable it.
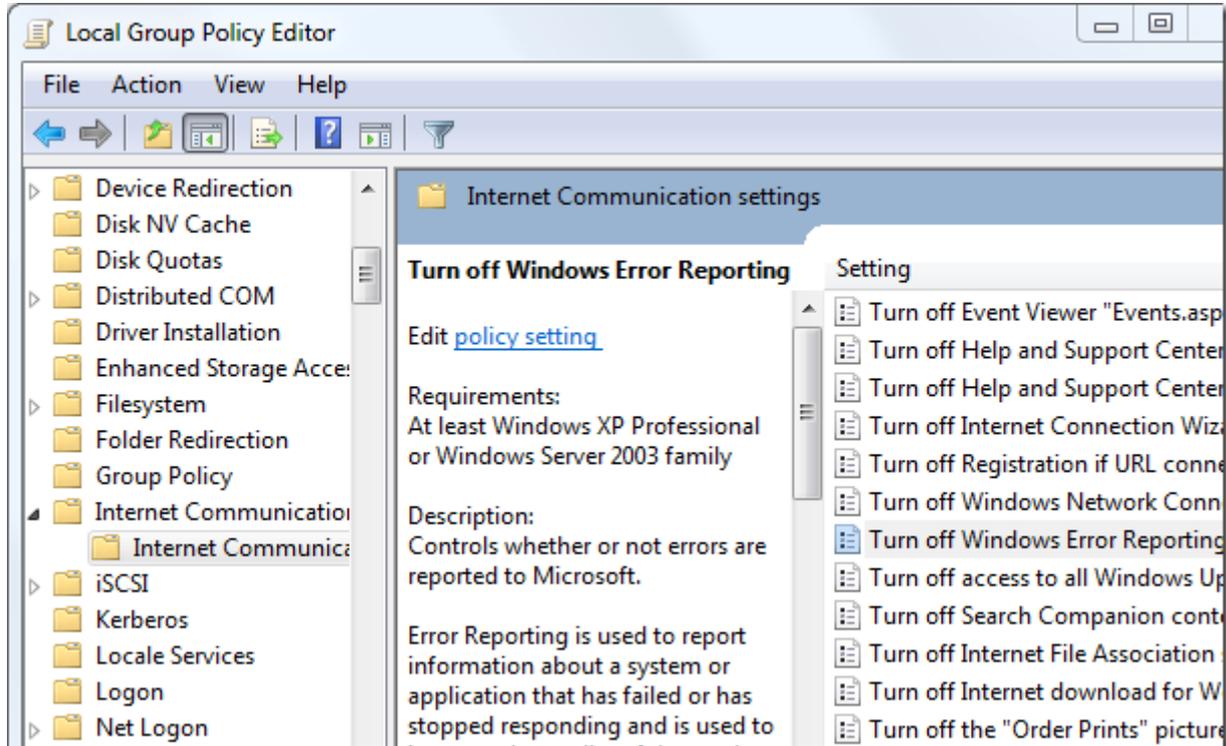
Disable Windows Message Popups

To disable Windows from showing messages at the bottom right corner of the screen a registry key can be added that prevents this.

HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\Advanced

DWORD: EnableBalloonTips = 0

Regular automatic reboot

It is recommended that a regular automatic reboot-job is configured that restarts the computer for example once per week. Do this using the built in Windows scheduler:

Start -> Programs -> Accessories -> System Tools -> Scheduled Tasks

You can for example schedule the following example command every Sunday:

C:\windows\system32\shutdown /r /f

Windows auto login

Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7

To make Windows automatically log in to the system without any user interaction, for example after a reboot, it has to be configured for this. In Windows XP the easiest way to achieve this is by using the command "control userpasswords2":

Start -> Run

(or press Windows + R)

Type **control userpasswords2** and press Enter.
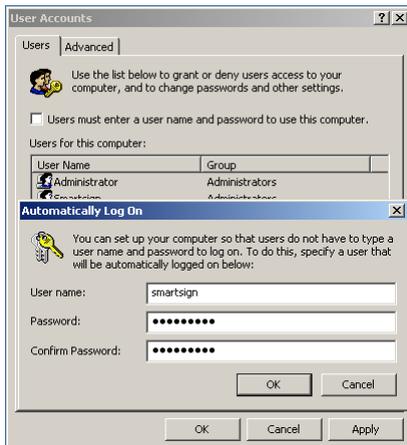
Deselect "Users must enter a user name and password to use this computer." Click on Ok and enter the Windows username and password for the user that automatically should log on.

If the computer is a member of a Windows domain this setting has to be applied to the Windows server.

Autostart Smartsign Player on Windows login

Check the following box to activate autostart on the player:
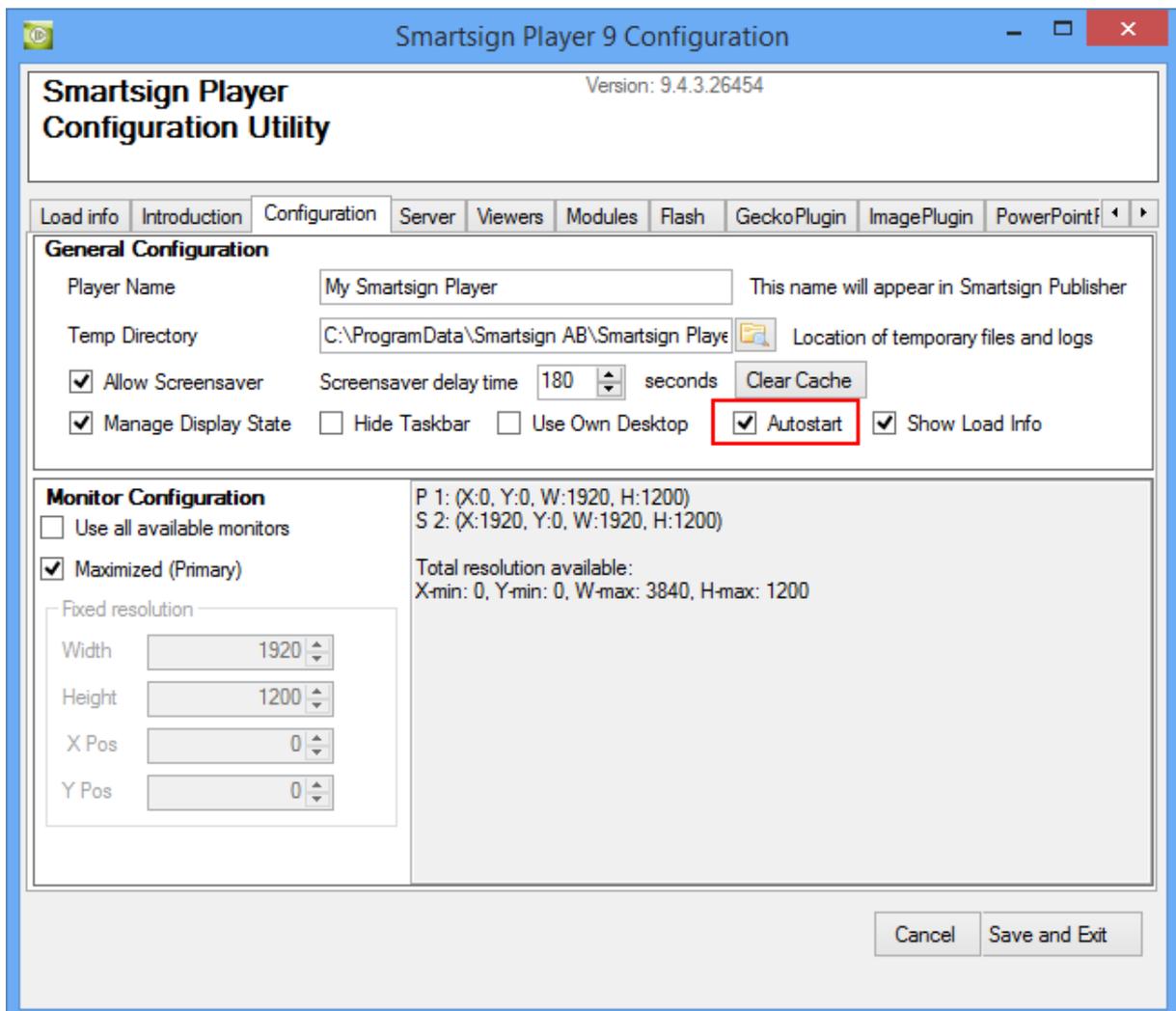
Uninstall and removal

The software can be uninstalled by running the Windows Add/Remove Software application.

For complete removal, complete the following tasks AFTER UNINSTALLATION:

1. Reboot the system.
2. Delete the "c:\Program Files\Smartsign Player 9" folder which will contain left over application files (configuration settings).
3. For each windows user account that has been running Smartsign Player, delete the folder: "c:\Documents and settings\[Windows username]\Application data\Smartsign\Player"
4. Also delete (if found) the following folder (with configuration settings):

"C:\ProgramData\Smartsign AB\Smartsign Player"

Run as screensaver

Smartsign Player can be configured to run as a screensaver on the computer. The benefit of running Smartsign Player as a screensaver is for example security because you can configure the system to lock the computer if Smartsign Player is stopped. To use Smartsign Player as a screensaver the first step is to register it as a screensaver.

1. Open explorer and navigate to Smartsign Players installation folder, typical "c:\program files\Smartsign Player 9"
2. Right click on Player.scr and choose install.
3. Choose appropriate settings for the screensaver and save the settings.

When running as a screensaver Smartsign Player will listen to both keyboard activity and mouse activity. Smartsign Player will use the same settings as when running normal so use Player Configuration to set up the player correctly.