

Audacity Module

CS4624 – NewModule Project – Chris Brown

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Executive Summary

Audacity is free, open-source software for recording and editing sounds. The purpose of this module is to have a self-contained instance of Audacity along with sample input files hosted on an IBM Cloud instance with the purpose of training new users on the software. This module is based off of the latest version of Audacity as of May, 2011 which is version 1.3.13 (Beta).

This module covers opening, recording, editing, saving, and converting audio. There is a summary of the types of audio formats supported by this version of Audacity and their benefits.

All content is contained inside of the cloud instance in PDF format. The cloud instance contains a sample, royalty-free audio file, Audacity 1.3.13, Foxit PDF reader, and VLC media player.

- Foxit PDF reader- a lightweight PDF reader used for viewing the module.
- VLC Media Player- and open-source media player which supports all of the file formats that can be exported by Audacity. Used for playback of audio this is exported outside of Audacity.

The module instructions are to be distributed individually, but a copy is contained on the desktop of the IBM Cloud Instance.

The IBM Cloud Instance is an instance of Windows Server Datacenter, 32-bit with 2.00 GB of RAM and a 2.26 GHz dual-core processor. The instance is to be accessed using remote desktop. Instructions for accessing the instance are contained inside of the module instructions.

Users Manual

All information is self-contained inside of the IBM Cloud instance. Login credentials should be provided with the module. The IBM Cloud instance can be accessed using Windows Remote Desktop.

All files can be found on the Cloud Instance Desktop. On the desktop, you will find:

- An MP3 file which can be imported into Audacity for use of editing, and exporting.
- Foxit PDF reader- a lightweight PDF reader used for viewing the module.
- VLC Media Player- an open-source media player which supports all of the file formats that can be exported by Audacity. Used for playback of audio this is exported outside of Audacity.
- A PDF version of the module.

To run Audacity, double-click on the Audacity icon.

All music files will automatically open in VLC when double clicked.

The PDF file will open inside of Foxit by default.

When exiting the module, please do not shut down the Windows instance. Please just exit the remote desktop connection.

Developer's Manual

There is no code which can be modified for this project. To learn about contributing to Audacity, please visit their website at <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>.

To contribute to the module, please modify audacitymodule.pptx. Please store the most recent version of the file in the Documents folder of the Cloud Instance and place a PDF version on the desktop. Archive the old version of the PDF before creating a new one inside of the Documents folder on the cloud instance as well.

All PDFs were created using Microsoft PowerPoint 2010.

There are a plethora of copyright laws associated with audio tracks that must be taken into consideration before distributing them. I am still not able to recommend a good source for finding this information. The track that I have included with this module is a classic song by Bach which has no restriction on commercial or private distribution. I suggest looking in classical music to find freely distributable files.

Lessons Learned

This module taught me a lot about using Cloud-based systems. I learned a lot about accessing and modifying cloud instances as well as their limitations. Copying files to and from the instance is a very lengthy process.

I also learned that finding freely distributable royalty-free audio is no simple task. There are a plethora of copyright laws associated with audio tracks that must be taken into consideration before distributing them. I am still not able to recommend a good source for finding this information. The track that I have included with this module is a classic song by Bach which has no restriction on commercial or private distribution. I suggest looking in classical music to find freely distributable files.

The schedule for this project was skewed slightly because of trouble that I had with finding a client. My original client was Jason Lockhart of Innovation Space at Virginia Tech. However, due to scheduling conflicts and trouble that I was having communicating with him, I had to change clients. Dr. Fox recommended James Dustin and Jennifer Sparrow as new clients. They have been extremely helpful in the short time that I have been working with them trying to make this module as high quality as possible.

Acknowledgments

I would firstly like to thank my instructor Dr. Fox (fox@vt.edu), for his help with finding clients and resources. His help and generosity made this module possible.

I would also like to thank my teammates for their help with working with cloud instances and for reviewing my module and testing the included tutorial. Group members were Conor Scott (conor.r.scott88@gmail.com), Dylan Slack (slack3r@vt.edu), and Saptak Sariya (saptaks@vt.edu).

The whole group can be reached at the email address multimedia-vt@googlegroups.com.

I would also like to thank my clients and reviewers from Innovation Space at Virginia Tech. James Dustin (fireman@vt.edu) and Jennifer Sparrow (jennifers@vt.edu) were of extreme help with making sure that this module is of the highest quality possible. You can find more information about Innovation Space at their website, <http://www.is.vt.edu/>.

References

Audacity: Free Audio Editor and Recorder. 05 May 2011. <<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>>