

SLINGSHOT FOR MT4



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1. Overview

Slingshot is an easy way of distributing an MT4 chart and also all the .ex4 files for custom indicators or an EA on that chart. The Slingshot Author app creates a single self-extracting executable which installs the chart file into selected copies of MT4, including all the chart's settings, and also installs the .ex4 files.

Slingshot can distribute either a single chart or all the charts which are open in MT4. A single chart can be published either as a template or as a profile (i.e. a new profile with one chart in it). Multiple charts have to be published as a profile.

Slingshot can either create a .exe file on your hard disk, which you can then upload to your own website or send by email etc, or it can upload the package to a page on www.fxblue.com which people can visit in order to download the file.

1.1 Example uses of Slingshot

- Providing files to support a webinar, i.e. clients can easily get the same chart set-up and all the indicators used by the trainer in a webinar
- Sharing your favourite chart set-up with other people
- Copying trading settings between MT4 installations on your own computer – either indicator settings for manual trading, or an EA and the parameters you are using
- Distributing an EA or custom indicator to clients, together with recommended or example settings

1.2 Premium version

Please note: some of the settings described in this document are premium features, and are not available in the standard version of the software.

As a further step beyond the premium version of the software, FX Blue can offer white-labelling of the [web pages](#) for downloading and commenting on Slingshot packages. For more information, please contact sales@fxbluelabs.com

1.3 Not a software-protection system!

Slingshot is **not** a software-licensing system. It simply automates a multi-stage installation process which otherwise has to be done by hand. It does **not** include facilities for software

vendors to lock EAs or indicators against customers' account numbers or hardware. (Vendors can of course continue to include any licensing of their own in files which are distributed using Slingshot.)

1.4 Software requirements

Both the Author app and the self-extracting installers which it creates require version 3.5 of the Microsoft .NET Framework. This should already be present on almost all Windows computers, but can be obtained if necessary from the following address:

<http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/download/details.aspx?id=22>

1.5 Bar history, symbol names, and server times

1.5.1 Chart bar data

Slingshot distributes a chart's settings (and indicators etc) between installations of MT4, but it does not distribute the bar history for the chart. For example, if you send a DAX30 chart to a copy of MT4 where the broker does not have this symbol, then the chart will be blank because the symbol cannot be traded and no data will be available.

1.5.2 Symbol names

The names of forex symbols can vary between different MT4 brokers (or even different account types on the same broker), e.g. EURUSD vs. EURUSDcx. Slingshot will attempt to [adjust symbol names automatically](#) when transferring profiles – but please note that this cannot be detected 100% reliably.

1.5.3 Bar times and graphical objects

Bar times can also vary between different MT4 brokers. For example, one broker may operate on GMT while another uses CET/CEST. Graphical objects on a chart such as labels or arrows are linked to specific times, and these will be drawn against the wrong bar if a chart is sent to a copy of MT4 using a different time-zone.

For example:

- Your broker is on GMT+2
- You distribute a chart with an arrow attached to a bar at 14:00
- Receiver's broker is on GMT (+0)

- MT4 will still put the graphical object on the bar at 14:00, but this is a *different bar* to your chart. The equivalent bar would be the one at 12:00.

1.6 Licence

Unless otherwise specified in writing by FX Blue, the Author app is licensed for personal use only. You are not allowed to distribute the Author app to other people, regardless of whether or not money is changing hands. You only have a licence to use the Author app if you, personally, downloaded it from our website.

Use of the premium version of the software is subject to additional requirements, only valid and licensed for use if confirmed to you in writing by FX Blue.

The software is provided entirely at the user's risk, and you should check it thoroughly before deploying it on computers trading real money. FX Blue accepts no responsibility whatsoever for any loss of any kind caused by installation or use of the software.

2. Using the Slingshot Author app

2.1 Running the Author app

You run the Author app by dragging and dropping the "MT4 Slingshot" script from the MT4 Navigator onto the chart which you want to distribute (or by double-clicking the script, which applies it to the active chart). If you want to distribute all the charts in MT4, you simply drop the Slingshot script onto any one of them, and then later choose the "[All charts](#)" option in the Author app.

2.2 Chart and profile/template options

On the main page of the Author app's settings you can choose which chart(s) you want to distribute and whether they are published as a profile or a template.

2.2.1 Chart mode

You can choose between three types of installation:

- Distribute only the selected chart in MT4 (as either [a template or a profile](#))
- Distribute all the charts which are open in MT4 (as a profile)
- A files-only installation, containing no charts and instead only using the [list of extra files](#). (This setting lets you use Slingshot just as a file-distribution mechanism.)

2.2.2 Profile or template

If you are only publishing one chart, you can choose whether it is distributed as an MT4 template or as a profile (i.e. a new profile with one chart in it).

If you are publishing all charts, then these have to be distributed as a profile. If you are doing a file-only installation, then the profile/template option is not applicable.

2.2.3 Package name

You need to choose a name for your package. This becomes the default name when a user installs your template or profile into their copy of MT4 – though the user can change it.

2.3 Extra files

Some EAs or custom indicators may need extra resources such as a DLL file, in addition to the .ex4 file for the EA/indicator which Slingshot includes automatically. If so, you need to use the extra-file list to tell Slingshot to include these files.

You can include any type of file from the MT4 data folder, including presets, templates, or scripts. You can also include any other EAs or indicators which are not used on the chart(s) you are distributing but which you nevertheless want to put in the package.

2.4 Options and package settings

2.4.1 Adjusting symbol names

When distributing a [profile](#), you can configure Slingshot to attempt [automatic adjustment of forex symbol names](#) between different brokers, e.g. turning a chart for EURUSD into a chart for EURUSDcx.

This option is turned on by default for profiles. It is not applicable to templates.

2.4.2 Removing graphical objects

Many indicators create objects on the chart such as labels and arrows – potentially thousands of them. It is often not necessary to distribute these objects because the indicator re-creates them when it starts up. If so, you can reduce the size of your package by choosing to have Slingshot remove all graphical objects from the chart(s) it is distributing.

Please note that graphical objects will be drawn against the wrong bars if you distribute a chart between copies of MT4 using brokers on [different time-zones](#).

2.4.3 Overwrite mode

By default Slingshot will always overwrite the .ex4 files for any custom indicators or EAs which it is distributing. However, you can instead tell it to check the last-write time of the .ex4 file on the receiving computer, and only to overwrite the file if the version in the Slingshot package is later.

2.4.4 Password

You can set a password which recipients of your installer have to enter before the installation will proceed. This is a *discouragement* against unauthorised use, not a full [licensing mechanism](#). It does not prevent someone who has used your installer manually sharing the files with someone else.

2.4.5 MT4 .srv filter

You can lock the .exe installer so that it only accepts copies of MT4 which contain specific .srv files. You can enter a list of values, separated by commas, which match against the start of .srv files in the MT4 config directory. For example, the setting "Broker1,Broker2" would match against MT4 installations using Broker1-Real, Broker2-Demo etc, but not Broker3-Real, Broker4-Demo etc. Again, this is a *discouragement* against unauthorised use, not a full [licensing mechanism](#). It does not prevent all use of your indicator/EA on other brokers.

2.4.6 Package expiry

You can set an expiry date on a package, as a warning to recipients that an installer may need replacing. The date you enter is compared against GMT time on the recipient's computer, using the Windows clock. This is not a [licensing mechanism](#), and it does not cause any indicator/EA to stop working on the specified date.

Please note that packages downloaded from the website have an [additional expiry date](#).

2.4.7 Welcome URL

If you enter a welcome URL, this is displayed in the user's normal web browser at the end of a successful installation. (Tracking such as Google Analytics should be able to link this visit with any previous visits by that person to your website.)

2.4.8 Terms and conditions URL

If you enter a URL for terms and conditions, this page displayed in a pop-up window which the user has to accept before the installation proceeds. (This page has to be a pop-up window rather than in in the user's normal web browser, and tracking such as Google Analytics may not link the visit to previous activity from the same person.)

2.4.9 Logo .png file

You can include your logo in the installer (in the top-left corner) by selecting a .png file. The recommended size for the logo is 32x32 pixels.

2.5 Type of distribution

Slingshot can either create a .exe file on your hard disk, which you can then run yourself or upload to your own website etc, or it can create a page on the www.fxblue.com website which people can visit in order to download the package.

2.5.1 Saving a file on your computer

If you choose to create a local file, you simply need to choose the filename and directory on your hard disk.

2.5.2 Uploading a package to www.fxblue.com

If you choose to upload the package to www.fxblue.com, you need to enter your username and password for FX Blue, and choose [options](#) – which can be changed later – about the page which is created on www.fxblue.com.

2.5.3 Installer expiry

Files which you create on your own computer do not expire unless you set an [expiry date](#). Packages which are downloaded from the website use any such expiry date, but also expire within 24-48 hours after download, helping to ensure that people always get the latest version (from the website) rather than continuing to use an old package which you may have [updated](#).

2.5.4 "Allow DLL imports" notice

Installation packages will ask users for confirmation if you are distributing a chart where there is a custom indicator or an EA with the "Allow DLL imports" option turned on.

If your indicator/EA does not need this setting, then you can turn off the notice by making sure that "Allow DLL imports" is not turned on for the indicator/EA. Please note that you need to make this change in the settings for the indicator/EA running on the chart. Changing the global setting in MT4's Tools/Options does not affect any indicators or EAs which are already attached to charts. (The setting in Tools/Options is the default for *future* additions of indicators/EAs to charts.)

2.6 Web publication options

Web publication from Slingshot creates a URL such as:

<http://www.fxblue.com/slingshot/Example-template/ed5eafb7afb407aae1a967ef3c7aaa9>

You can choose options for the page on the www.fxblue.com site, all of which can later be changed (on the website, after logging in).

2.6.1 Public vs unlisted

Slingshot pages can either be public or unlisted.

A public package can be found by anybody via the index and search facilities at <http://www.fxblue.com/slingshot/>, or via the public list of your packages at <http://www.fxblue.com/slingshot/authors/youraccount>. However, you can use the package [password](#) so that people can see the web page for the package but cannot run the installer without knowing the password.

An unlisted package is private because people have to know the specific URL in order to reach the web page. The page is not listed or searchable at <http://www.fxblue.com/slingshot/> (and its random ID is not guessable because there are 10^{38} possible IDs – more than the number of stars in the universe).

2.6.2 Log-in for downloads

You can choose whether people have to log in to www.fxblue.com before they can download your package. If you turn this option on then you can see which users have downloaded your package, and you can potentially contact them through the www.fxblue.com website (provided that they have allowed such contact).

2.6.3 Discussion forum

You can choose to turn on a discussion forum about your package, including the ability for people to submit ratings (on a scale of 1 to 5).

Visitors have to log in to www.fxblue.com in order to leave comments. Each account can only submit one rating; a new rating replaces any older one. The total rating for your package

increases as more people review it; a single five-star rating does not immediately give your package an overall rating of five stars.

As the owner of the page, you can delete comments from other people, to remove spam or profanity etc. However, removing a comment does not remove any rating attached to it – you cannot boost the rating of your package by deleting all except the most favourable reviews!

2.6.4 Description

You can provide a description of your package, using up to 1000 characters.

After you have created the page on the www.fxblue.com website, you can also use the editing facilities to add a link to a web page on your own site containing more information. (Please note that these links have a nofollow attribute. You will gain no search-engine advantages by using this link as spam in an attempt to boost your site's profile.)

2.6.5 Uploading a revised package to an existing page

You cannot have two Slingshot web pages with exactly the same name. If you upload a package with the same [name](#) as an existing page, you will be asked if you want to replace the existing package. This gives you a way of uploading a new version while keeping the old URL (and any discussion forum and download history etc).

2.6.6 Screenshot

The Author app automatically takes a screenshot of the active chart in MT4. You can preview this screenshot in the Author app, and choose to have it uploaded to the website when creating your Slingshot page.

You cannot replace the screenshot with your own choice of image; you can only use the picture which Slingshot takes automatically. However, after uploading a screenshot, you can edit the page details to remove the screenshot.

2.6.7 Quota

There is a limit on the total size of packages which you can upload to www.fxblue.com. You can see this quota on the private page which lists all your packages:

<http://www.fxblue.com/slingshot/my-packages>