



Theme Manager

Theme Manager Guide

Version 3.0

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Important:

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Developed and Published by:

Stardock Corporation
15090 Beck Road - Suite 300
Plymouth, MI 48170 USA
<http://www.stardock.com>

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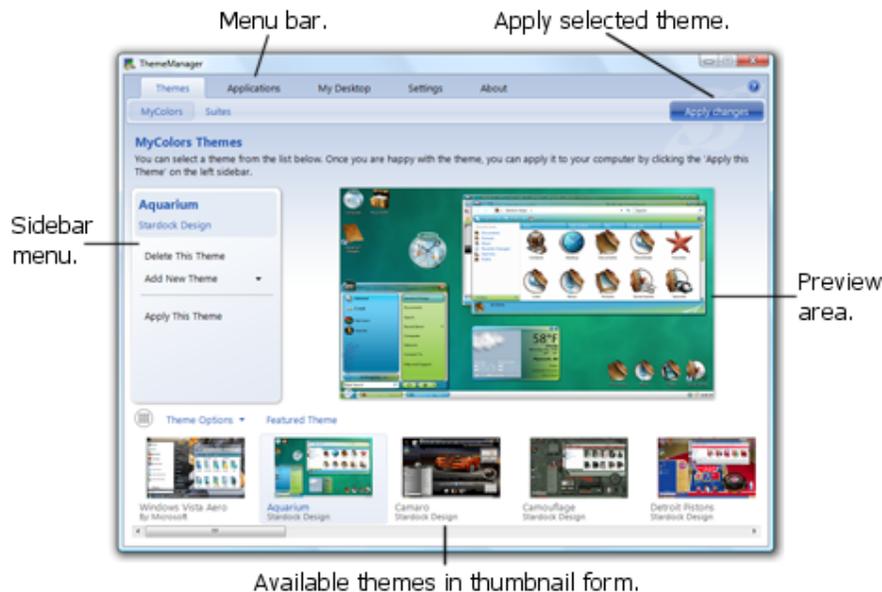
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1. Welcome to Theme Manager



Theme Manager allows you to change the various graphics elements, sounds, gadgets and more, by working with other installed Stardock software. It also manages built-in Windows features, such as: cursors, screen savers, and wallpaper. Theme Manager simplifies changing all of these elements by doing it in one place, as opposed to running each individual application or Windows menu.

Theme Manager not only allows you to apply existing themes from MyColors, and WinCustomize.com, but it also allows you to create your own Suites (themes). These suites can be constructed from existing elements in Theme Manager, in addition to the thousands available on WinCustomize.com. Plus, if you only want say, a new set of cursors installed, Theme Manager allows you to select just that. You can pick and choose just the elements you want applied to your desktop.

Features of Theme Manager

You can change of the following elements of your desktop, by having quick access to all of these Stardock programs (if installed): BootSkin Pro (Vista), CursorFX, DeskScapes, DesktopX, IconPackager, LogonStudio Vista, ObjectDock, SoundPackager, and WindowBlinds. In additional, you can also manage Windows cursors, screen savers, and wallpapers.

- Wallpapers.
- Visual Styles (WindowBlinds).
- Animated Wallpaper (Deskscapes format).
- MP3 Players (Windows Media Player, Cool Player).
- Sounds (SoundPackager format) .
- Mouse cursors (both Windows and CursorFX).
- Logon Screens (LogonStudio Vista format).
- Boot Screens (BootSkin Vista format).
- Icons (IconPackager themes).
- Widgets (DesktopX Widgets).
- Screen Savers (Windows format).
- Launchers (ObjectDock, WorkShelf).
- ...and more.

System Requirements

- Windows XP (32-bit), Windows Vista (32-bit) or Windows Server 2003.
- 200 MB free drive space.
- 256 MB RAM.
- Internet Connection to download, install and activate.

Upgrading from Previous Versions

Impulse will handle the upgrade from previous versions of Theme Manager.

Updates

Check Impulse for updates to Theme Manager and other installed Stardock software.

Additional Themes

Check WinCustomize.com for thousands of free graphic and sound elements for use with Theme Manager and the associated applications.

Location of Themes

Themes you create are stored (by default) on your computer with a ".suite" (without quotes) file extension in the folder:

Windows Vista: C:\Users\Public\Documents\Stardock\ThemeManager

Windows XP: C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Documents\Stardock\ThemeManager

Support

Please contact Stardock Support at: <http://www.stardock.com/support>. On that web page you will find helpful FAQs and other troubleshooting information. If you are unable to resolve your issue, please use the "Contact Support link" to email Support. When emailing, please include as much information about your computer (i.e. version of Windows, type of computer, version of Theme Manager (on About tab), etc.). This information will allow support to diagnose your issue much quicker and allow for a faster response.

Resources

For additional information on Theme Manager, please refer to these articles on WinCustomize:

["A call to the ScreenShooters!"](#) by Zubaz, (November 29, 2009).

<http://forums.wincustomize.com/331457>

["Theme Manager 3 Walkthrough"](#) by Island Dog, (January 20, 2009).

<http://www.wincustomize.com/articles.aspx?aid=337081>

Also, www.WinCustomize.com is a great resource for not only getting a lot of great skins, themes, suites, icons, gadgets, etc., but also provides articles, forums, gallery, store and more. This is a great site run by Stardock to bring together the best in skinning (graphics) for Windows. The site is free to use.

You can [upload a suite file](#) (<http://www.wincustomize.com/upload2.aspx?libid=22>) you created to share on WinCustomize. This may include original material you actually created, or elements (content) from WinCustomize. It is common courtesy to add a thanks to the authors of the content you used in your Suite Information Comments.

Direct link to WinCustomize message Forums: <http://forums.wincustomize.com>.

Documentation

The version of this manual is 1.0 (2-6-09) and is based on Theme Manager (version 3.09). This manual was written and is maintained by Jim Kennedy (TheProf). Please email comments or corrections regarding this documentation to: documentation@stardock.com.

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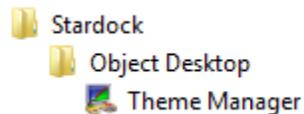
2. Introduction

Theme Manager is an application that works with other Stardock Object Desktop products, that are installed on your computer as well as Windows graphic elements (i.e. wallpaper, cursors, screen savers, media player). You do not need to own all of the Stardock applications, however it will only work with those installed. The following Stardock products are supported through Theme Manager: BootSkin Pro, CursorFX, DeskScapes, DesktopX, IconPackager, LogonStudio Vista, MyColors, ObjectDock, SoundPackager, and WindowBlinds. Also, additional graphic elements can be downloaded from Wincustomize.com where thousands are free, though Master Skins have a small fee.

The purpose of Theme Manager is to make it easier to quickly access the different Stardock programs & other Windows graphic elements in one place. This allows you to change the icons for instance, without having to run IconPackager. You could change the wallpaper, skin, cursors, sounds and more all through Theme Manager! However, if you want to run one of these applications, Theme Manager gives you quick access to most of them by simply clicking the  icon on the respective Theme Manager tab. Plus, you can still change the Dream (animated wallpaper) for instance, through DreamScape directly as opposed to running Theme Manager. Then when you run Theme Manager, it will reflect the changes you made in DreamScape or visa versa.

Getting Started

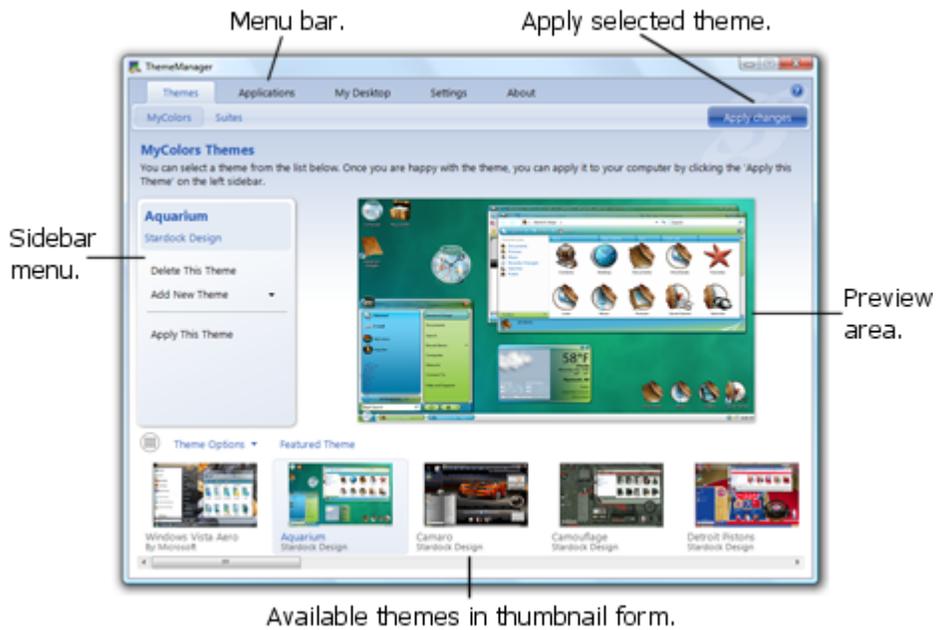
To run Theme Manager, from the Start Menu, click on All Programs, then the Stardock folder, Object Desktop, and finally Theme Manager.



When you first start Theme Manager, you may see the flashlight icon as it searches for themes. This is normal.



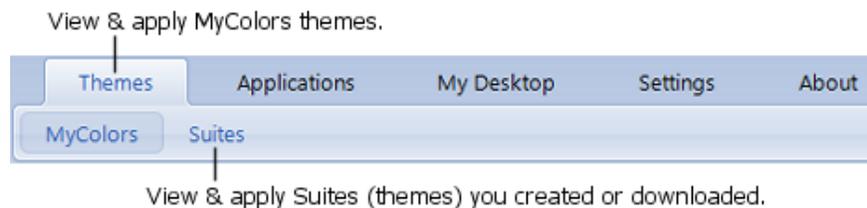
The Theme Manager window consists of: a menu along the top (beginning with Themes), a sub-menu underneath with the MyColors & Suites sub-tabs, a sidebar menu down the left side, a preview area to the right of that and a selection of themes along the bottom. The preview area displays what theme your desktop has applied (installed), currently it is set to Windows Vista Aero on Windows Vista).

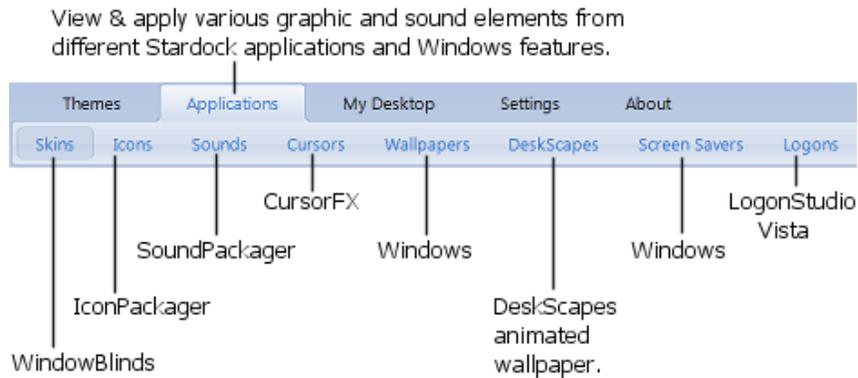


Initially, Theme Manager only has the Windows default theme listed, which comes with Windows. However, if you have MyColors installed with one or more themes, they will be displayed along the bottom as thumbnails. Each one representing a different MyColors theme. The MyColors program is free to download from Stardock, but most themes have a fee. The rest of this manual will explain in detail what everything does on each tab, but for this introduction you will be given an overview of Theme Manager.

Menu Bar

The menu bar along the top of the Theme Manager window acts as a way to navigate between the different areas you can customize. The top row categorizes each area (i.e. Themes, Applications, My Desktop, Settings, About) with related sub-tabs under each.





The first three menu options (i.e. Themes, Applications, My Desktop) are related to applying graphic & sound elements. Here is a list of Stardock applications and Windows graphic elements supported in Theme Manager and where they are accessed.

Element Quick Reference

Element	Type	Menu	Sub-tab	File Extension**
CursorFX *	Stardock	Applications	Cursors	.cursorfx, .zip
DeskScapes *	Stardock	Applications	DeskScapes	.dream
IconPackager *	Stardock	Applications	Icons	.iconpackager, .iptheme, .ip
LogonStudio Vista *	Stardock	Applications	Logons	.logonvista
MyColors ***	Stardock	Themes	MyColors	.mycolors
Screen Savers *	Windows	Applications	Screen Savers	.scr
SoundPackager *	Stardock	Applications	Sounds	.soundpack
Suites *	WC	Themes	Suites	.suite
Wallpaper *	Windows	Applications	Wallpaper	.bmp, .jpg, .jpeg, .dream
WindowBlinds *	Stardock	Applications	Skins	.uls, .wba

Notes:

* = You can download additional themes from WinCustomize.com (WC) with many being free.

** = File Extensions are related to File Types, which are the characters at the end of a filename (right side), such as: Aquarium.soundpack. With the ".soundpack" being the file extension. File Types are listed in Windows Explorer in their own column something like "SOUNDPACK file" (for our "Aquarium.soundpack" example). By default, Windows does not display file extensions (example: Aquarium). However, if you turned this option on, each file will display the extension as well (Aquarium.soundpack). Regardless if this is on or off, when you navigate to a folder, if there are any files matching the file type(s) it is looking for, they will be displayed in the window. The information in this column is provided for as a convenience.

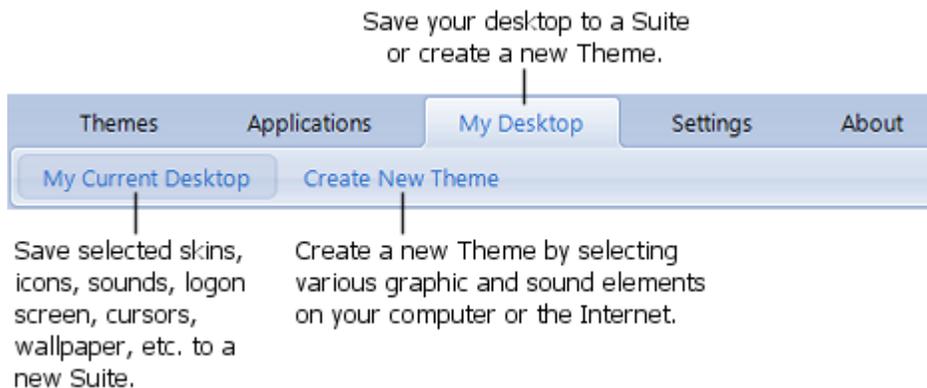
*** = Additional MyColors themes can be purchased through the MyColors program or Impulse. Additional elements (i.e. ObjectDock, MP3 players, BootSkin Vista, DesktopX, ...) are supported by Theme Manager and may be included in suites, etc..

If you click on a tab, such as Applications, then Sounds, but do not have SoundPackager, you will see the SoundPackager logo. If you click either the logo or the web site address below it, your web browser will display the product page for that application. You can get information on purchasing the product. You can also click the red **Install Now** button in the upper, right corner which will run Impulse where you can install the missing application or purchase it if you do not own it yet. However, MyColors is free to download.



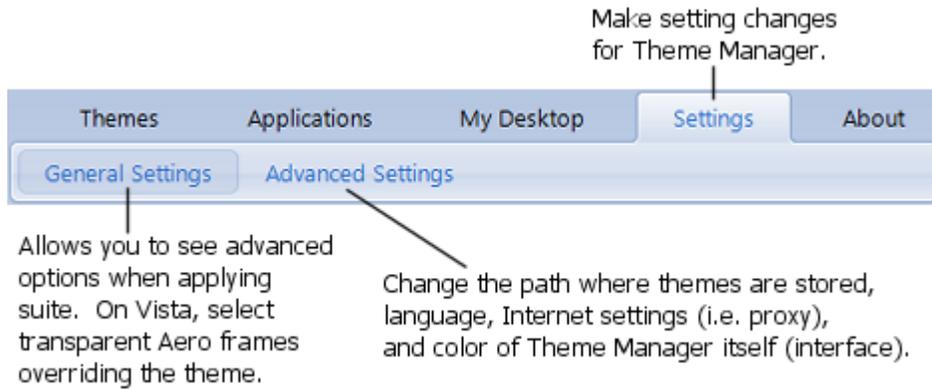
My Desktop

The My Desktop menu option allows you to save My Current Desktop settings. For instance, you could apply a new skin, icons, sounds, cursors, wallpaper, etc., then save all of those choices or just save select elements.



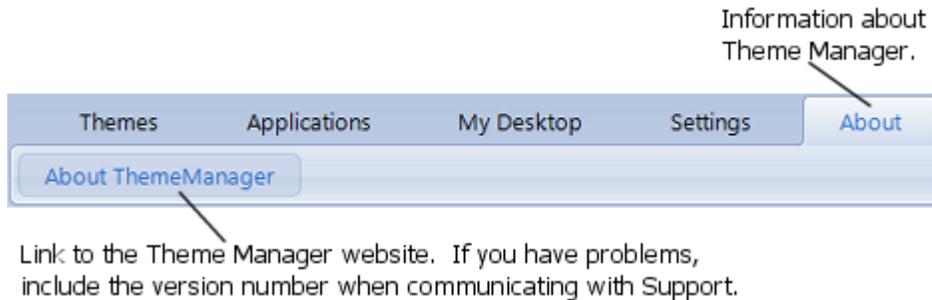
Settings

The Settings menu option is divided between General Settings & Advanced Settings. General Settings on Windows Vista include: seeing advanced options when applying suites, and using the Vista Aero window frames instead of the skin. This is where the only real difference between Windows Vista & XP occurs. Windows XP does not include the second option (i.e. Aero window frames).



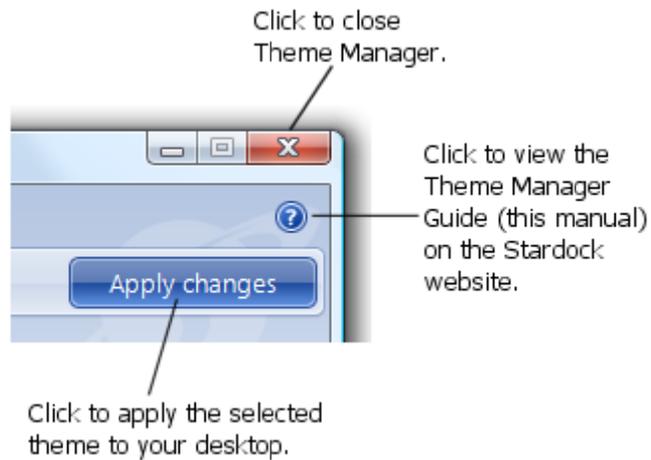
About

The About screen displays the title/logo of the program (i.e. Theme Manager), version (i.e. 3.00.057 (x86)) and web address for Stardock (i.e. <http://www.stardock.com>). Clicking either the logo or web address will load your web browser and display the Stardock web site.



Help

To view the most current version of this instruction guide, click the Help  icon in the upper right corner of Theme Manager. This will display the Theme Manager Guide on the Stardock web site. You need to be connected to the Internet to view this site.



Closing Theme Manager

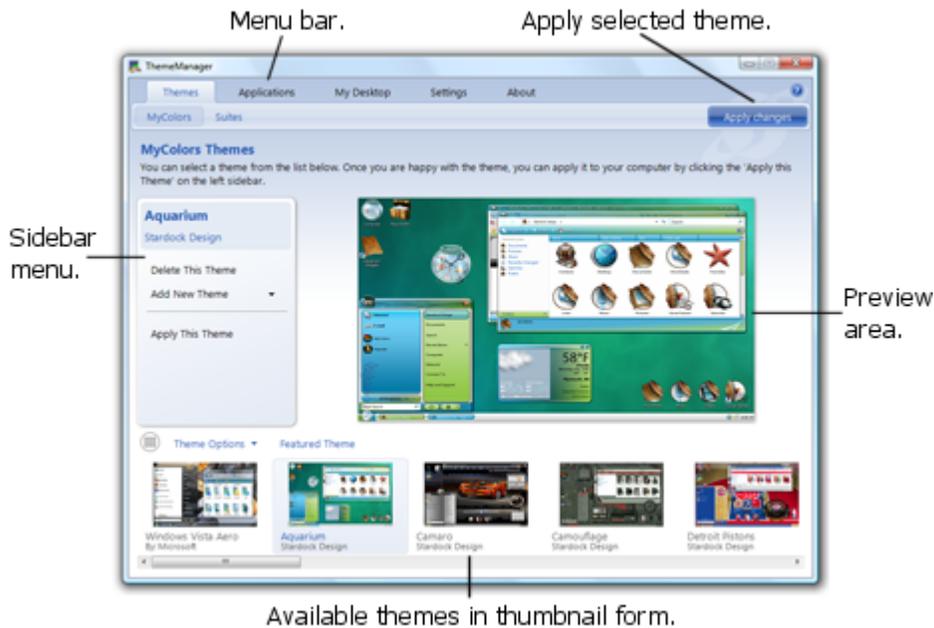
To Close Theme Manager, simply click the close  button in the upper right corner of the window. Or press <ALT> + <F4>. Or left of right click on Theme Manager title bar (top of window) and select Close.

3. Themes: MyColors & Suites

When Theme Manager is run, the first menu option displayed is Themes with the submenu of MyColors & Suites. This section will describe both tabs, which are identical in layout, but different in purpose.

MyColors Tab

The MyColors tab is for applying any MyColors themes you have loaded on your computer. This screen is divided into three areas. The sidebar menu down the left side, a preview area to the right of that and a selection of themes along the bottom seen as small thumbnail pictures. The preview area displays what theme your desktop has applied (installed), currently it is set to Windows Vista Aero (on Windows Vista).



Initially, Theme Manager only has the Windows (default) theme listed, which comes from Microsoft. However, if you have MyColors installed with one or more themes, they will be displayed along the bottom as thumbnails. Each one representing a different MyColors theme. The MyColors program is free to download from Stardock, but most themes have a fee.

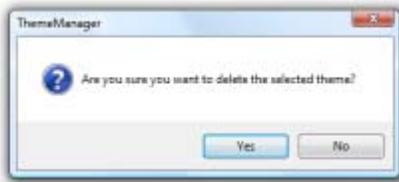
Sidebar Menu

The sidebar menu on the left displays the title of the selected theme, who it was created by, Delete This Theme, Add New Theme (from disk or web), and Apply This Theme.

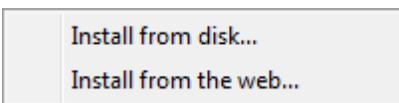


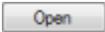
The first item on the top of the menu is the title of the theme (i.e. Aquarium) and the author (i.e. Stardock Design).

The second option is "Delete This Theme", which if clicked will ask if you are sure you want to delete this theme. Deleting the theme will remove it from Theme Manager, as well as from your hard-drive. (Pressing the or <Delete> key on your keyboard has the same effect and is the hotkey shortcut.) Click to delete it. (Click or to abort.) Note: You can not delete the built-in Windows (default) theme, so this option will be grayed out (unavailable).



The third option is "Add New Theme", which displays a pull-down menu if you click the text or small down arrow. The choices are "Install from disk..." to install a new theme from your hard-drive or other storage device attached to your computer. Or "Install from the web..." which opens your web browser & displays the [MyColors web site](http://www.stardock.com/products/mycolors/) (<http://www.stardock.com/products/mycolors/>) for new themes.



If you install from disk, locate the folder where the new themes are, click on it, then click . (Click  or  to abort.)



If you install from the web, and the file is a .suite (not compressed as a .zip) you should see Theme Manager automatically add it to the list of available themes. Otherwise, you may need to use "Install from disk..." to locate it & add it. If the file is zipped (.zip) or .rar or other compressed form, you will need to uncompress/extract it first, then "Install from disk...".

The fourth option is "Apply This Theme", which will apply the currently selected theme to your desktop. If the theme has already been applied, nothing will happen. Click on the thumbnail of the desired theme (under the preview area), then click "Apply This Theme". Your display may lose color and fade out, to show it is working on changing the various graphic elements of your desktop to the new theme. Some themes include more elements than others, such as gadgets, clocks, etc.. So if you see one theme has a gadget, but another does not, do not be alarmed. This is dependent on the author of the theme.

Preview Pane

The preview shows what the currently selected theme (or Windows default) will look like if applied to your desktop with: sample icons, window frames, Start Menu, gadgets (if included), task bar, system tray, etc.. To preview each theme, simply click on the thumbnail at the bottom and the preview will change to that theme. To apply the theme to your desktop, do any one of the following:

- Double-click on the desired theme's thumbnail.
- Right-click on the theme, then select **Apply Theme**.
- Select the desired theme by clicking on it once, then click on **Theme Options** and select **Apply Theme**.
- Select the theme, then click "Apply This Theme" on the sidebar menu.
- Click on the desired theme's thumbnail & click the **Apply changes** button in the upper right hand corner.

It is recommended to close other applications before applying a new theme, otherwise it may slow the conversion.

Available Themes

The list of available themes runs along the bottom of the window, underneath the sidebar menu & preview area. Each theme is represented by a small picture called a thumbnail. Under the thumbnail is the title of the theme, and beneath that is the author (or company) that created it. Clicking on a theme, changes the picture in the preview area to the theme. If there are more themes than will fit in the Theme Manager window, you can use the horizontal scroll bar (bottom on window) to view the other themes.



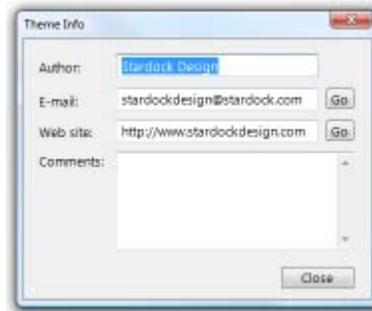
Theme Options

Clicking "Theme Options" (above the available themes on the far left) or right-clicking on any theme will display a menu of options that include:

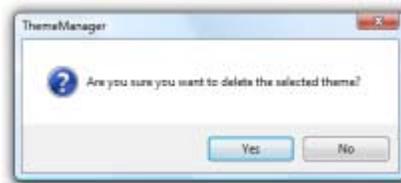
Apply Theme	
Theme Info...	
Delete Theme	Del
Open Folder	
Add New Theme	▶
Refresh	F5

Theme Options Quick Reference

Action	What it does...
Apply Theme	Applies the selected theme to your desktop
Theme Info...	Displays information about the selected theme, including: Author, E-mail, Web site, and any Comments. Clicking <input type="button" value="Go"/> next to the E-mail will open your email program & address a new message to the Author. Clicking <input type="button" value="Go"/> next to the web site address will open your web browser & display the web site (if you are connected to the Internet). Click <input type="button" value="Close"/> or <input type="button" value="X"/> to close the dialog box. Note: The Windows built-in (default) theme has no information, so this option will be grayed out (unavailable).



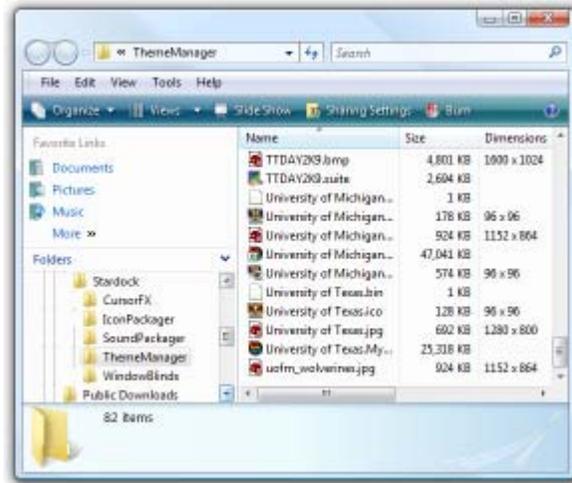
Delete Theme	This acts the same way as clicking "Delete This Theme" on the sidebar menu, it will ask you to confirm the deletion of the selected theme from the hard-drive. (Pressing the or <Delete> key on your keyboard has the same effect and is the hotkey shortcut.) Click <input type="button" value="Yes"/> to delete it. (Click <input type="button" value="No"/> or <input type="button" value="X"/> to abort.) Note: You can not delete the built-in Windows (default) theme, so this option will be grayed out (unavailable).
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Open Folder

Opens a Windows Explorer window displaying the folder where the themes are stored on the hard-drive. By default on Windows Vista, this folder is: C:\Users\Public\Documents\\ThemeManager. (Where <user name> is the name of the user logged on and where your data files are stored under.) Click the  button to close the Explorer window.



Add New Theme

Works the same way as clicking "Add New Theme" on the sidebar menu. It opens a small menu with two choices of: "Install from disk..." and "Install from the web...". (See "Add New Theme" above, for details on these options.)



Refresh

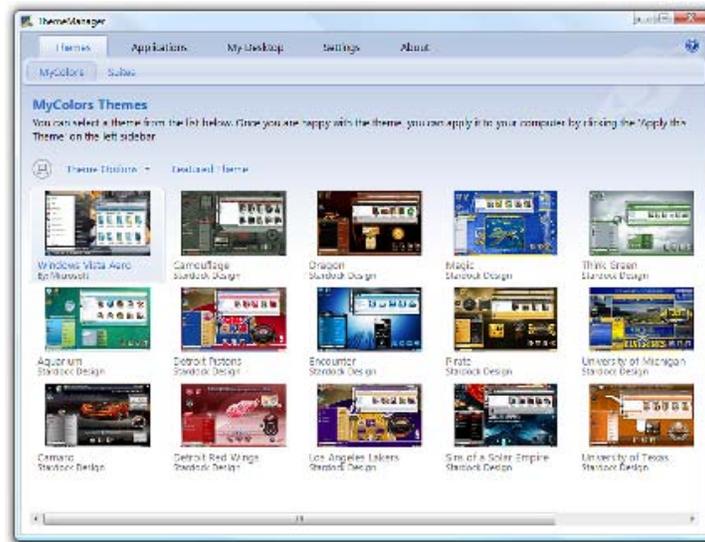
Clicking this option or pressing the keyboard shortcut <F5> will refresh the list of available themes. This is handy if you downloaded a compressed (i.e. .zip, .rar) theme, uncompressed it and copied the contents to the Theme Manager folder while Theme Manager was running. Refresh will force it to check the hard-drive for any new themes that you added, changed or removed and update the list.

Featured Theme

Clicking the "Featured Theme" link above the list of available themes, will open your web browser & display the MyColors web site with the featured theme. This is a new or special theme that changes from time to time so check often to see what new theme has been released!

Alternate Grid View

If you have a large number of themes, using the horizontal scroll bar can be rather difficult to find the desired theme quickly. Clicking the  icon (lower left, under the sidebar menu) will change the display to list just the thumbnails of each available theme. The preview area & sidebar menu will be removed. This allows you to view a larger number of themes at one time. A horizontal scroll bar will appear if you have more than will fit in the window. If you would like to preview the desired theme, click on it, then click the  icon to return to preview mode. It will be displayed in the preview pane.



While on the grid view screen, clicking "Theme Options" (or right-clicking on a theme) will display the same options as on the preview pane view. Also, clicking the "Featured Theme" will take you to the web site.

Clicking the  icon will return you to Preview mode.

Suites Tab

The Suites tab is the same as the MyColors tab, except most Suites are free on WinCustomize.com. You can create your own suites on My Current Desktop sub-tab (under My Desktop). All of the menu choices, links and how you apply a suite is the same as the MyColors themes. A suite, like a MyColors theme, may contain any of the following: wallpaper (for different monitor resolutions), icons, skin, sounds, gadgets, boot screen, logon screen, cursors, ObjectDock, and more.

The default Windows Vista file path for Suite files:

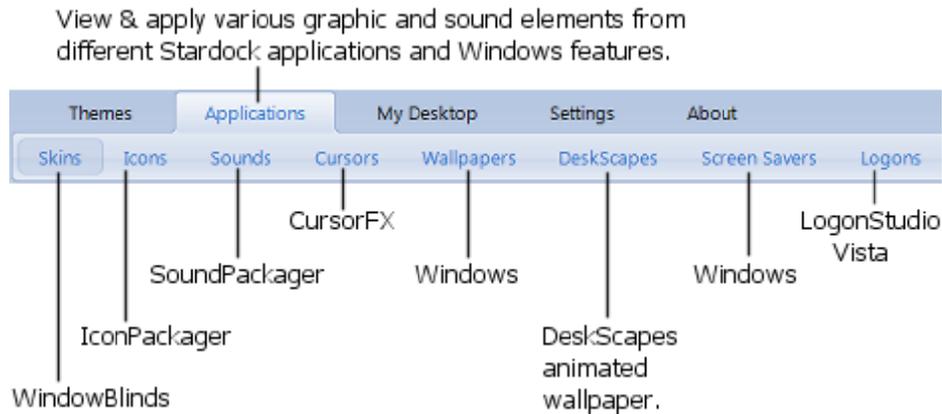
C:\Users\Public\Documents\

(Where <user name> is the name the person logged on your computer & where documents are stored.)

If you select "Add New Theme", then "Install from the web...", your browser will open the WinCustomize.com web site, instead of MyColors. WinCustomize has a large number of free themes you can download at no charge. These and other themes are created by a large user community. You can create themes as well and share what you create with other users like yourself.

4. Applications: Overview

The Applications menu allows you to select various graphic and sound elements from across the different sub-tabs. Each sub-tab is related to a different Stardock application (i.e. WindowBlinds, DeskScapes, ...) or Windows feature (i.e. wallpapers, screen savers). If you want to change just your icons, click on the "Icons" sub-tab and select a package from IconPackager. Like the Themes tab, you must have each of the applications installed to use them through Theme Manager. Otherwise a web link will be provided to the product page for the missing application.



Each of the following sub-tabs work the same way: Skins, Icons, Cursors, Wallpapers, Screen Savers and Logons. These sub-tabs will be covered in this section. The remaining sub-tabs (i.e. Sounds, DeskScapes) will be covered in the next section ([5. Applications: Sounds & DeskScapes](#)).

You will notice these tabs look very similar to the tabs under the "Themes" menu option. However, there is no sidebar menu. There is a large Preview Pane and list of Available Themes in thumbnail form on the bottom. Also, each sub-tab has the same grid view  icon, and "Theme Options" pull-down menu. Right-clicking on any theme (on the bottom) will display the same menu as the Theme Options.

Minor differences between the sub-tabs include the "Wallpapers" tab which includes a "Filter By Category" menu. This helps narrow your search for wallpapers that are Static, or Themed. Another difference is that the "Skins" and "Wallpapers" sub-tabs include a Substyles menu for any that support it. Plus all sub-tabs include a settings  icon which opens the associated application for that tab (i.e. WindowBlinds for the "Skins" tab).

Preview Pane

The preview shows what the currently selected theme (or Windows default) will look like if applied to your desktop. To preview each theme, simply click on the thumbnail at the bottom and the preview will change to that theme. So if you are on the "Cursors" tab, you will see sample icons for different actions. For the "Icons" tab, you will see sample icons and so on. To apply the theme to your desktop, do any one of the following:

- Double-click on the desired theme's thumbnail.
- Right-click on the theme, then select **Apply Theme**.
- Select the desired theme by clicking on it once, then click on Theme Options and select **Apply Theme**.
- Click on the desired theme's thumbnail & click the **Apply changes** button in the upper right hand corner.

It is recommended to close other applications before applying a new theme, otherwise it may slow the conversion.

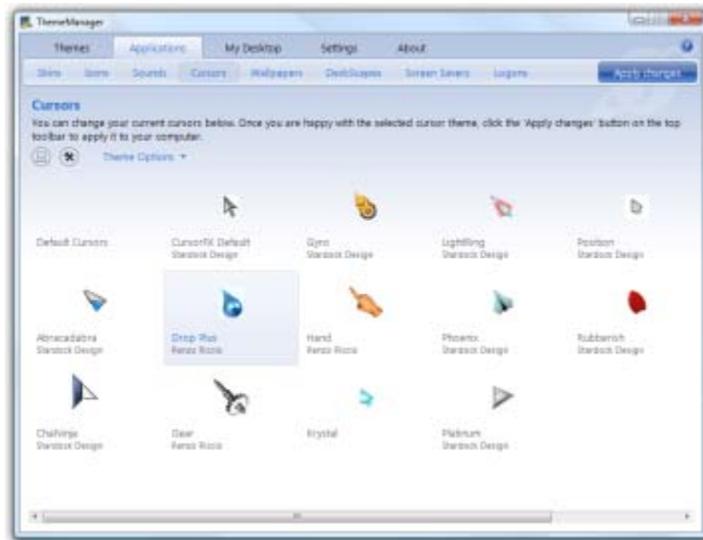
Available Themes

The list of available themes runs along the bottom of the window, underneath the preview area. Each theme is represented by a small picture called a thumbnail. Under the thumbnail is the title of the theme, and beneath that is the author (or company) that created it. Clicking on a theme, changes the picture in the preview area to the theme. If there are more themes than will fit in the Theme Manager window, you can use the horizontal scroll bar (bottom on window) to view the other themes.



Alternate Grid View

If you have a large number of themes, using the horizontal scroll bar can be rather difficult to find the desired theme quickly. Clicking the  icon (lower left corner) will change the display to list just the thumbnails of each available theme. The preview area will be removed. This allows you to view a larger number of themes at one time. A horizontal scroll bar will appear if you have more than will fit in the window. If you would like to preview the desired theme, click on it, then click the  icon to return to preview mode. It will be displayed in the preview pane.



While on the grid view screen, clicking "Theme Options" (or right-clicking on a theme) will display the same options as on the preview pane view. Also, clicking the "Featured Theme" will take you to the web site.

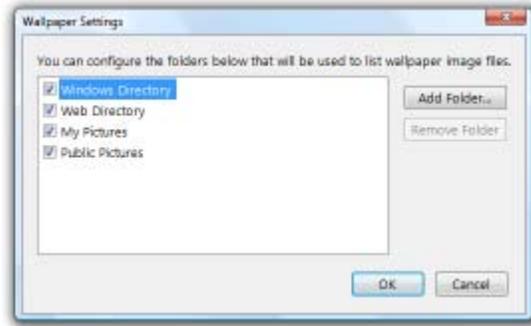
Clicking the  icon will return you to Preview mode.

Settings Icon

If you would like access to more settings than what Theme Manager provides, click the Settings  icon (lower left corner) to run the associated application. The Theme Manager window will remain open.

Wallpaper Settings

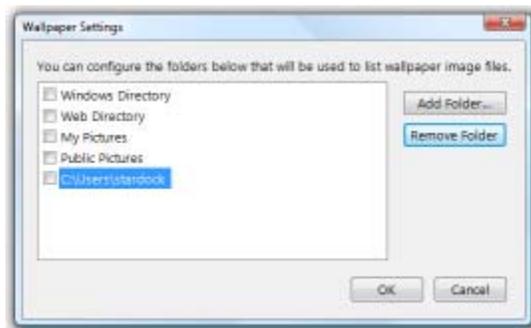
For the Wallpapers tab, when clicking the Settings  icon, it will open a small window (dialog box) with options on where you want Theme Manager to look for wallpaper on your computer. Check the box next to a folder to have it included or uncheck it to be skipped. You can also add additional folder(s) with the button and remove folders by selecting it and clicking the button.



Clicking the **Add Folder...** button will open a dialog box to allow you to locate the folder you wish to add. If you want to create a new folder instead, browse to the desired folder, then click the **Make New Folder** button and a new folder will be created, allowing you to name it. (If you make a mistake in naming it after you press the <Enter> key, you can select the folder & right-click on it to display the standard Windows commands, including "Rename".) Once you find (or create) the folder, click the **OK** button and it will be added to the list in the "Windows Settings" window. (Click **Cancel** or **X** to abort.)



To remove a folder, click on the desired folder to select it (highlighted), then click the **Remove Folder** button and it will be removed from Theme Manager. This will not remove it from your hard-drive, only from Theme Manager. It does not matter what folder(s) are checked or unchecked, only which folder you have selected that will be removed.



When done making changes, click the **OK** button. (Click **Cancel** or **X** to abort.)

Screen Saver Settings

When clicking the  icon on the "Screen Savers" tab, if there are settings available for the selected screen saver a dialog box will appear. Each screen saver varies in what options you are allowed to change. Some do not have any settings that can be changed so either you will not see the  icon or you will see a message box telling you there are no settings for the screen saver. Since each screen saver's options are different, it will not be covered here. These are the same settings you would see through Windows desktop preferences.

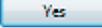
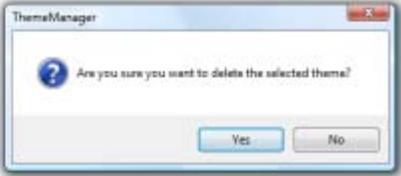
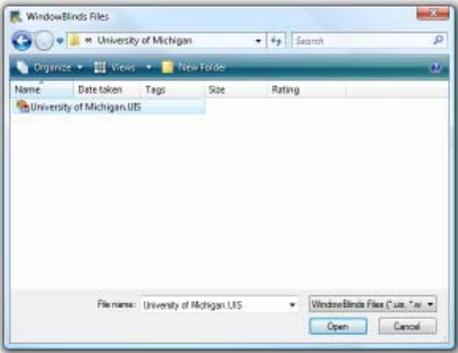


Theme Options

Clicking "Theme Options" (above the available themes on the left) or right-clicking on any theme will display a menu of options that include:

Apply File	
Delete File	Del
Install from disk...	
Install from the web...	
Refresh	F5

Theme Options Quick Reference

Action	What it does...
Apply Theme	Applies the selected theme to your desktop
Delete Theme	<p>This acts the same way as clicking "Delete This Theme" on the sidebar menu on the "Themes" tab, it will ask you to confirm the deletion of the selected theme from the hard-drive. (Pressing the or <Delete> key on your keyboard has the same effect and is the hotkey shortcut.) Click  to delete it. (Click  or  to abort.) Note: You cannot delete the built-in Windows (default) theme, so this option will be grayed out (unavailable).</p> 
Install from disk...	<p>Opens a Windows Explorer window displaying a folder on your hard-drive. Use it to navigate to the folder where the theme(s) is that you want to add to Theme Manager. The file type (seen above the Open & Cancel buttons) will be set for the application tab you are on at the moment. For example, if you are on the "Skins" tab, the file types Explorer will display (if found in the folder) will be .uls or .wba. To see all files, regardless of type, click the file type menu and select "All Files". Then click on the desired file, and click . (Click  or  to abort.)</p> 
Install from the web...	<p>This will open your web browser and display the WinCustomize.com web site related to the Applications tab you are on (i.e. IconPackager). So if you are on the "Icons" tab, your browser will display IconPackager packages you can download and add to your computer. There is a large selection of free themes for the Stardock applications. Some of the themes, called Mater Skins have a small fee which helps support the author.</p>
Refresh	<p>Clicking this option or pressing the keyboard shortcut <F5> will refresh the list of available themes. This is handy if you downloaded a compressed (i.e. .zip, .rar) theme, uncompressed it and copied the contents to the Theme Manager folder while Theme Manager was running. Refresh will force it to check the hard-drive for any new themes that you added, changed or removed and update the list.</p>

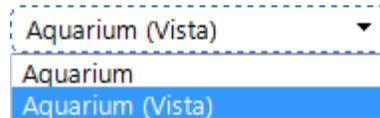
Filter By Category

On the "Wallpapers" tab is an extra option called "Filter By Category" (under the preview area) that allows you to view in the list of available themes only those that are either Static (i.e. normal wallpaper), or Themed (wallpaper from suites or MyColors themes). Clicking the link will open a small menu, which allows you to check (include in list) or uncheck (exclude from list) the options. Or you can click "Select All" (to check all boxes) or "Select None" (uncheck all boxes). Click outside the menu to close the menu and update the listing of themes.



Substyles

On the "Skins" tab you will see a pull-down menu (lower, right corner under preview) that contains a list of Substyles. Substyles (or compound skins), offer alternative choice(s) such as different colors. Clicking on the pull-down will open a small menu you can select from. Some substyles may be for Windows XP or Vista, but you can apply either to your computer regardless which you have. If you click on a different substyle it will update the preview.



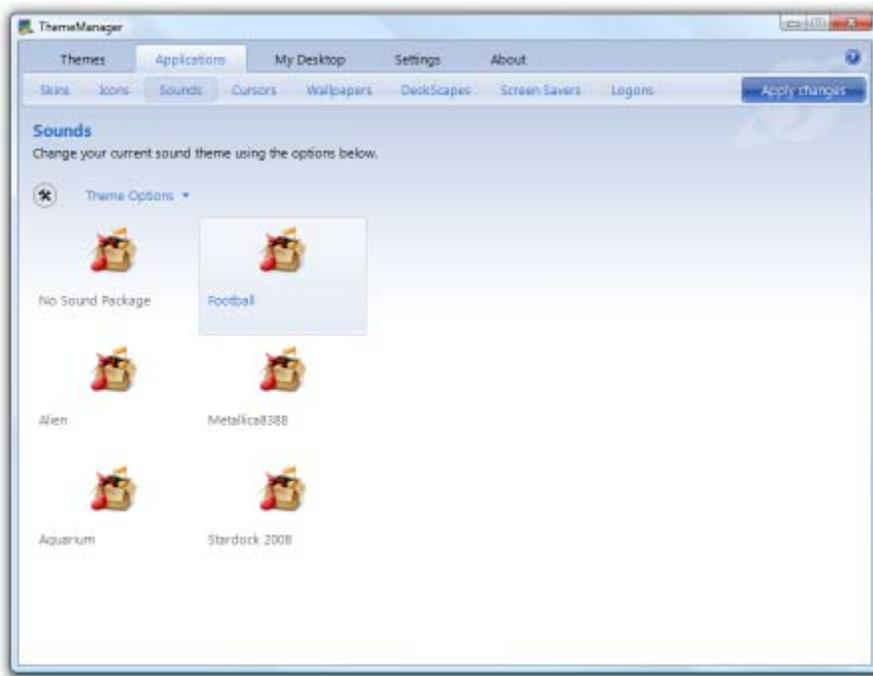
Not all skins have substyles, in these cases this option will not be seen on the screen.

5. Applications: Sounds & DeskScapes

Under the "Applications" menu are two sub-tabs called "Sounds" (SoundPackager) and "DeskScapes" for the program of the same name. These two tabs have a few differences from the other tabs under "Applications" and will be detailed in this section.

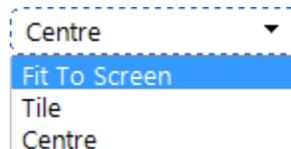
Sounds Tab

The only difference with the Sound tab is that there is no Preview pane, only the Grid View to see what sound themes are available. All of the other options (i.e. Settings, Theme Options, right-clicking on a theme opens Theme Options menu) and clicking **Apply changes** button act the same as the other tabs in the [4. Applications: Overview](#) section.



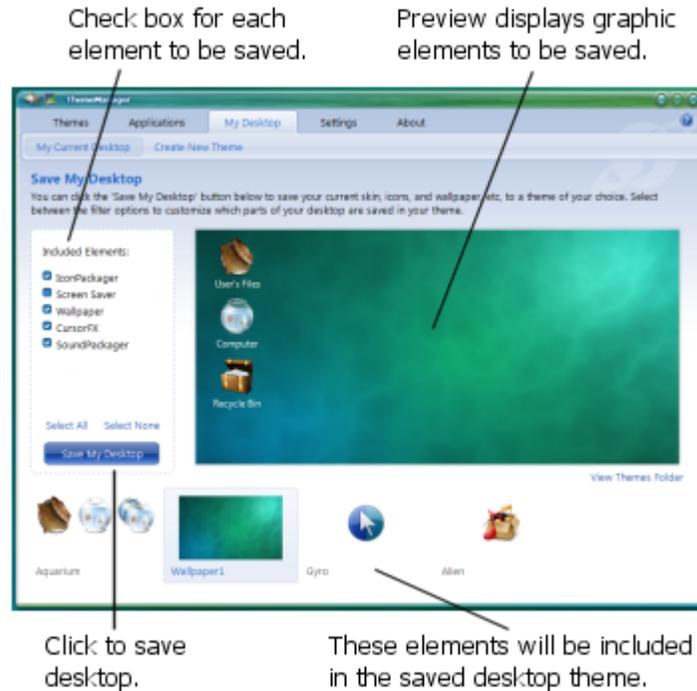
DeskScapes

The DeskScapes tab is the same as the Sounds tab, except you will see a pull-down menu in the upper, right corner. This menu gives you the standard Windows choices of sizing the wallpaper for your display area and include:



6. My Desktop: My Current Desktop

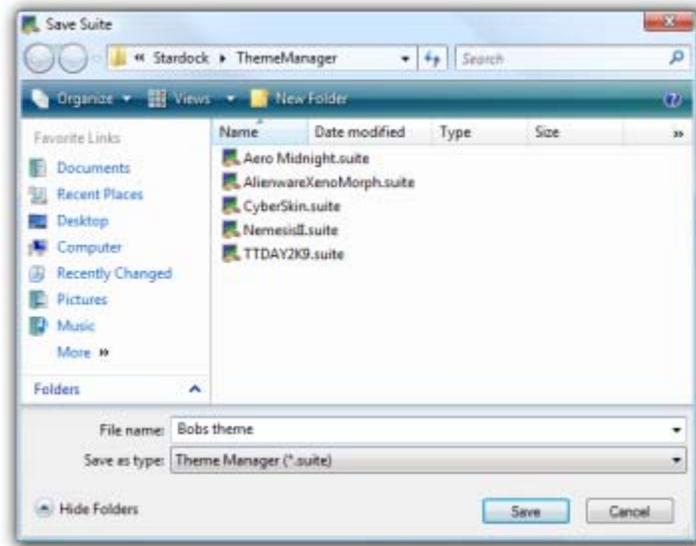
The "My Desktop" menu tab contains "My Current Desktop" which allows you to save elements you already have applied to your desktop as a new theme. The "Create New Theme" sub-tab allows you to create a new theme for different areas of the desktop. This section will cover the "My Current Desktop" sub-tab.



My Current Desktop contains a list of elements (on the left) currently applied to your computer, which may be included in a new saved theme. By checking the box next to each element you want saved, it will appear in the list of elements at the bottom of the window. If you want all elements included, click "Select All" to check all of the boxes. If you do not want any elements, click "Select None". If you only want one or two items in the list with a long list, it might be quicker to "Select None", and then check just the boxes you want.



As you check a box for each element, if it is a graphic item, it may appear in the preview area. Uncheck Wallpaper and notice the background in the preview turn white (no wallpaper). After selecting the desired elements to be saved, click the **Save My Desktop** button. It will then ask you to name your new suite (.suite) file. Existing suites in the Theme Manager folder will be listed. After typing in a name, click **Save**. (Click **Cancel** or **X** to abort.)



The suite you created will then appear on the "Themes" tab, under the "Suites" sub-tab. If you click on the thumbnail Theme Manager created of your desktop at the time you saved it, it will appear in the preview area. Saving your own suites allows you to change to other suites or themes, but return to the suite you created at a later time. You can create as many suites as hard-drive spaces allows.

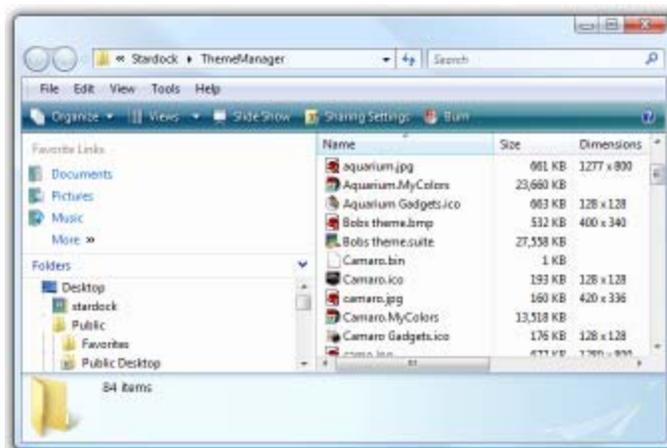


AlienwareXenoMorph
Stardock Design



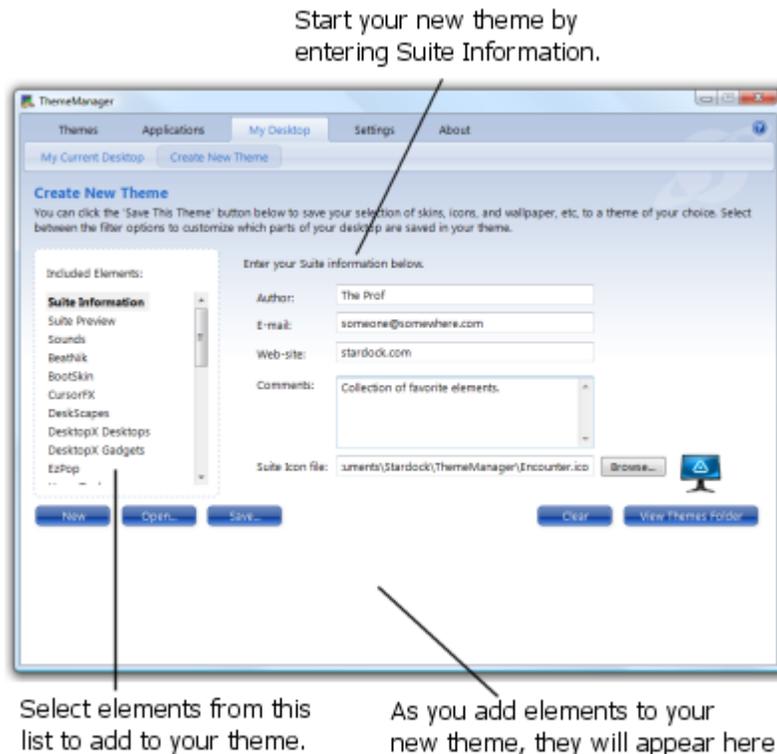
Bobs theme
stardock

If you would like to see what theme elements exist on your hard-drive in the Theme Manager folder, click the "View Themes Folder" link (lower, right corner) under the preview area. It will open an Explorer window listing the various elements. To close the window, click .



7. My Desktop: Create New Theme

The "Create New Theme" sub-tab under the "My Desktop" menu option allows you to create a new theme. You can also load existing themes, including ones you saved on the "My Current Desktop" tab. Down the left side is a list of elements you can use to piece together an entirely new theme with just the elements you want. You can build your new theme by using existing elements on your hard-drive, or from the internet. To the right of the "Included Elements" list is where Theme Manager will ask you information or for files to add to your theme. On the bottom, like on other tabs, are where the various elements you add to the theme will appear.



New Theme

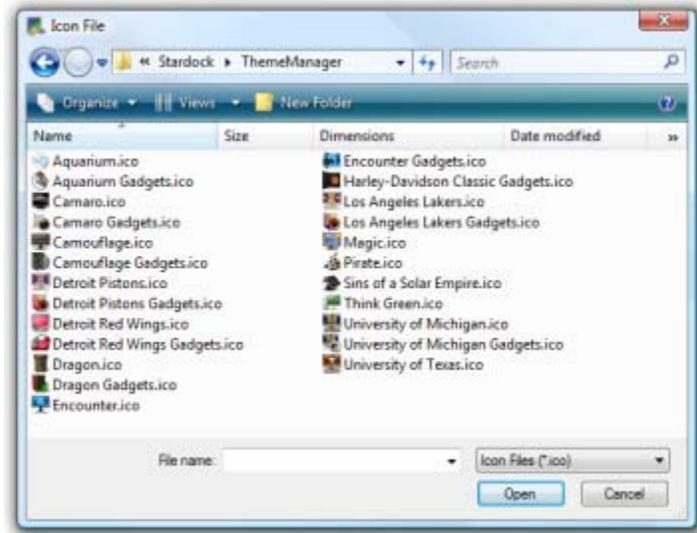
To start a new theme, click the blue button (lower, left corner) called **New**. This will clear any existing information from the various elements, leaving you with a clean start.

The first item in the "Included Elements" list is "Suite Information" where you provide basic information about the new theme. Next is "Suite Preview" which allows you to add a screenshot or other graphic image of your theme. This is the thumbnail & larger preview image you will see on the "Themes" tab for your new theme. These will be covered first, then you will shown some of the different elements in the list.

Suite Information

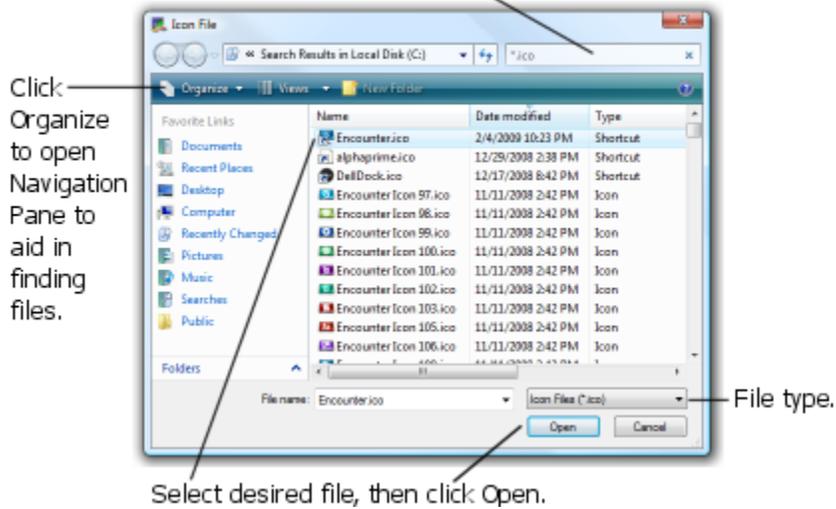
"Suite Information" is the first thing you select to add the "Author" (i.e. real name or an alias), "E-mail" address if you are going to share the theme with the public on WinCustomize.com, or with friends, your "Web-site" (if you have one), and any "Comments". You can also also select an icon to represent your

theme (suite) by clicking the **Browse...** button. This allows you to locate an icon file (.ico) on your computer. A familiar Explorer window will open to help you locate the file.



If you have trouble changing to a different folder, you can turn on the "Navigation" pane, by clicking on "Organize" (upper left corner), select "Layout", then "Navigation Pane". This will add common folders, etc. (on the left) to allow you to change folders more easily. Then as you click on each folder, if it finds any elements (i.e. icons) they will be listed.

Use the Search bar to locate files on your computer.

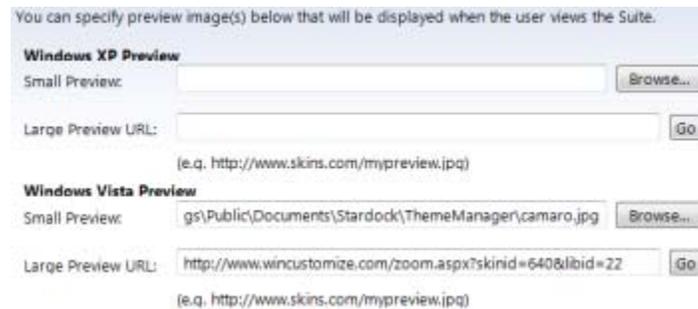


You can also use the "Search" bar in the upper, right corner to locate files on your hard-drive(s). However, you should change to the root folder on your hard-drive so it can find more files in all folders on your computer. To do this, click on "Computer" in the navigation pane, then double-click on your hard-drive (i.e. Local Disk (C:)), then click on "Search" and type in what you are looking for. If you use the file types listed in the table in the section (2. Introduction) or look at the File Type (lower, right-hand corner) you could type "*.ICO" (without quotes) and it will find all icon files (or whatever element you are looking for). The asterisk (or *) is called a wildcard character, meaning Windows will find any file with a .icon extension.

After you locate & click on the desired icon file, double-click it (this will auto-close the window) or click . (Click  or  to abort.) The icon you selected will appear to the right of the  button.

Suite Preview

The next item in the "Included Elements" list is "Suite Preview" which allows you to add a screenshot or other image to represent your theme. You can have a preview for Windows XP, Vista or both. The "Small Preview" is for the thumbnail and preview seen in Theme Manager, while the "Large Preview" is for a web based screenshot of your theme.



You can specify preview image(s) below that will be displayed when the user views the Suite.

Windows XP Preview
Small Preview: 
Large Preview URL: 
(e.g. <http://www.skins.com/mypreview.jpg>)

Windows Vista Preview
Small Preview: 
Large Preview URL: 
(e.g. <http://www.skins.com/mypreview.jpg>)

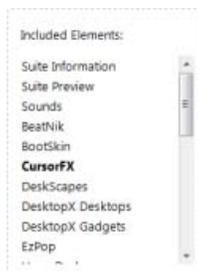
You can create your own screenshot by arranging icons, windows, etc. on your desktop, then press the <Print Screen> key. Next, open a graphics program (i.e. Windows Paint, Paint Shop Pro, Photoshop) and select Edit, then Paste (from clipboard). From there you can save it as a .BMP, .JPG or .JPEG. Then you can use that file as your preview.

To add a Small Preview to either XP or Vista, click , locate & select the file, then click . (Click  or  to abort.) For the Large Preview, if your theme has a screenshot on WinCustomize.com for instance, copy the web address (URL) from your web browser & paste (or type) it into the "Large Preview URL" field & click  to verify the link works.

Included Elements

The remaining items in the "Included Elements" list are actual elements, most being graphic, with a couple that are sounds. Most of the elements ask for the same information, except these will be different: DesktopX Gadgets, Sounds, and Wallpaper. Each of these four types of screens will be detailed here.

The first type of screen is seen when you click on any element, except: Sounds, DesktopX Gadgets or Wallpaper. So for our example, we will look at adding a CursorFX theme to our new theme. First, "CursorFX" is located in the list & clicked on.



The screen changes to display the following, asking you for the "Skin/Theme Name", "Skin/Author", "Local File" and "Download URL". If the theme is on your computer, click **Browse...** (for Local File). If you want to locate & download a file from WinCustomize, click the radio button for "Download URL" and click **Search...**.



The screenshot shows a dialog box with the following fields and controls:

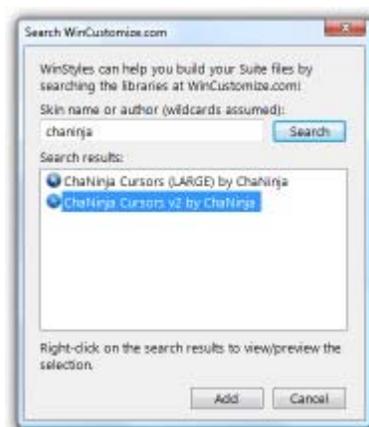
- Text input for "Skin/Theme Name:"
- Text input for "Skin/Theme Author:"
- Radio button for "Local File:" (selected)
- Text input for "Local File:" with a **Browse...** button to its right.
- Radio button for "Download URL:"
- Text input for "Download URL:" with a **Search...** button to its right.
- Text at the bottom: "(Use the Search button to search WinCustomize.com)"

Clicking **Browse...** for "Local File" will open a small window (dialog box) displaying a list of themes it has found.

If what you want is listed, locate & click on it and then click OK. (Click **Cancel** or **X** to abort.) (You may also double-click on the theme & it will automatically close the window.) The path to the theme will appear in the "Local File" field and the Name & Author of the theme maybe filled in for you.

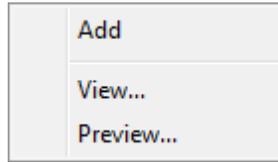
If you did not find the desired theme or none were listed, you can click **Browse...** and an Explorer window will open and allow you to locate the desired file. To select the file, either double-click on it (Explorer and the "Browse Local Files" dialog box will close) or click on the file, then click **Open** and both windows will close. (Click **Cancel** or **X** to abort.) The file path will appear next to "Local File".

If you prefer to search WinCustomize.com for a different theme, click the round (radio) button next to "Download URL" and click **Search...**. A small dialog box will open asking you to type in the name of a skin or author on WinCustomize.com and click **Search...**. Then it will that it will search and return the results. If you didn't find what you wanted, try different words, names and try again. (If you have trouble, use your web browser to view themes on WinCustomize.com before typing something in.)

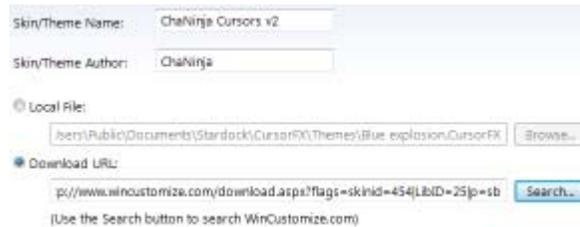


If you did find something interesting in the dialog box, you can right-click on each theme and a menu of choices will appear: Add, View... and Preview... . Clicking Add is the same as clicking **Add** button at the bottom of the dialog box, which will add it to your theme. Clicking "View..." will open your web

browser and display the WinCustomize page with details for that theme. Clicking "Preview..." will open your web browser and display a screenshot of the selected theme on WinCustomize.



Once you found the desired theme in the dialog box, click on it, then click . (Click  or  to abort.) The Name of the theme and Author maybe filled in for you, otherwise you can call it anything or type in the title & author.



As you add elements to the new theme, you will see the elements appear on the bottom of the Theme Manager window.



Clearing Information

If you ever want to start over with a theme element, like the CursorFX one we just did, click the  button and the form will be erased.

View Themes Folder

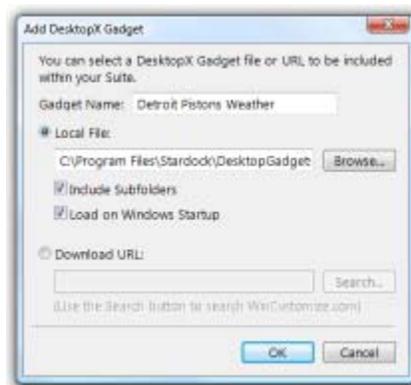
If you ever want to view the Theme Manager themes folder, click the  button. You can use this to see what files are on your hard-drive and where. To close, click the  button.

DesktopX Gadgets

Adding a "DesktopX Gadget" changes the screen to include: and buttons for adding/removing gadgets and a button locate a shortcut icon. Adding a shortcut icon may fill in the "Desktop Shortcut Name" field automatically. It will also display the icon to the right of the button. You can add gadgets from DesktopX, MyColors, etc..



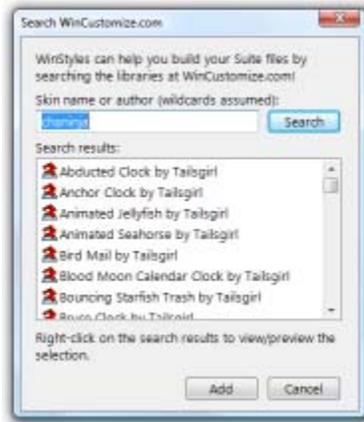
Clicking opens a dialog box that allows you to search your computer (i.e. hard-drive, CD, DVD, flash/memory card, ...) or search WinCustomize. The "Gadget Name" may fill in automatically when you select the gadget. For "Local File", you can check/uncheck boxes for "Include Subfolders" (which will search folders under your currently selected folder when you click) and "Load on Windows Startup" (starts the gadget when you start Windows, saving you from having to manually run the gadget).



Clicking (next to "Local File") opens an Explorer window, after you locate and select the desired gadget, click on it and select . (Click or to abort.) Then on the "Add DesktopX Gadget" dialog box, click . (Click or to abort.)

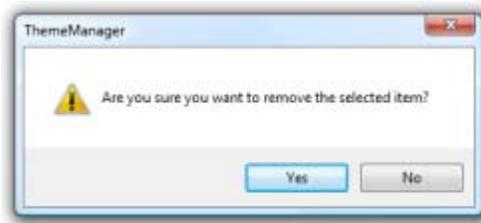
(For reference, on Windows Vista the default path for Desktop Gadgets is: C:\Program Files\Stardock\DesktopGadgets.)

To download a gadget instead, on the "Add DesktopX Gadget" dialog box, click the round (radio) button "Download URL" and click . The "Search WinCustomize.com" dialog box will open, type in the name of a gadget (widget) or the author's name and click . The results will be displayed. If you would like to "Add" (gadget to theme), "View" (see gadget web page on WinCustomize) or "Preview" (view screenshot from WinCustomize), like when adding an element previously, right-click on it and a menu will open.



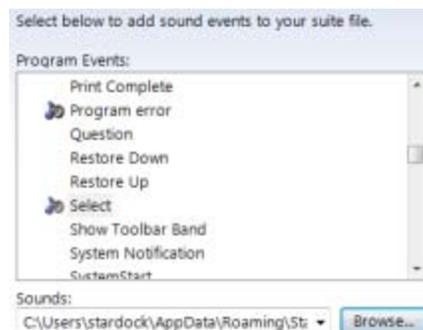
To select the desired gadget, click on it, then click . (Click or to abort.) Then on the "Add DesktopX Gadget" dialog, click OK to accept. (Click or to abort.) The gadget will be added to the box in DesktopX Gadgets to be included in the new theme. You can add more than one gadget and they will be displayed in the box as well.

To remove a gadget from the box, click on it, and click . Click to remove it. (Click or to abort.)

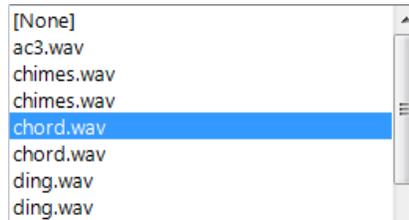


Sounds

The Sounds element includes a list of Windows Program Events, which are actions that you can attach sounds too. For instance, you could change the default sound Windows makes for "Device Connect" (when connecting a new device (i.e. USB device) to your computer) or a new sound when you "Exit Windows". This list will not show any existing sounds attached to events, only ones you add in creating a theme or editing a saved theme.



Scroll to an event you want to change, click on it. You can attach an existing Windows sound to it by clicking the pull-down arrow under "Sounds" (left of **Browse...** button). This will display a long list of standard sound files you can click on to select from.



After clicking on a sound in the list, an icon will appear to the left of the event (i.e. Program error, Select). You can also add other, non-standard Windows sounds to events which is how SoundPackager works. You can browse your computer for other WAV type (.wav) files by selecting the event you want to change and clicking the **Browse...** button. An Explorer window will open, allowing you to browse/search your computer for additional WAV files. After locating the desired file, click to select, then click **Open**. (Click **Cancel** or **X** to abort.) An icon will appear next to the event.

Wallpaper

The last unique element is "Wallpaper", clicking on it displays a form with a box to add wallpaper files to "Local File" and "Download URL". You have two wallpaper size choices, either (4:3) ratio (non-widescreen monitor) or (16:9) ratio (widescreen monitor). You can add multiple wallpapers to a theme, and make one of them your default one by checking the box for "Default Wallpaper Set".



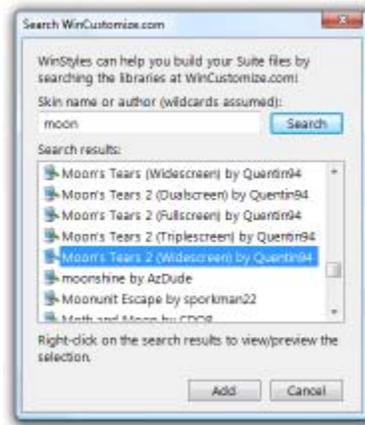
Select a wallpaper by clicking the **Browse...** button for (4:3) or (16:9). An Explorer window will open, allowing you to locate & select the desired wallpaper. Click **Open** to accept it. (Click **Cancel** or **X** to abort.) The "Wallpaper Name" should be filled in for you, otherwise you can type something in. Then click OK (Add Wallpaper dialog box) or click **Cancel** or **X** to abort.



When browsing, to see what wallpapers look like, click the "Views" button (upper, left corner) to change to a preview mode. You may need to click it a few times or you can click the pull-down menu next to it and select an Icons view.

To download a new wallpaper instead, click the radio button "Download URL" and click . A dialog box will open, type in a wallpaper name or author from WinCustomize and click . If you want to Add, View or Preview, like previous elements, right-click on a theme and make a selection.

Select a wallpaper from the search results, and click . (Click or to abort.) The URL path will appear under "Download URL".



Save Theme

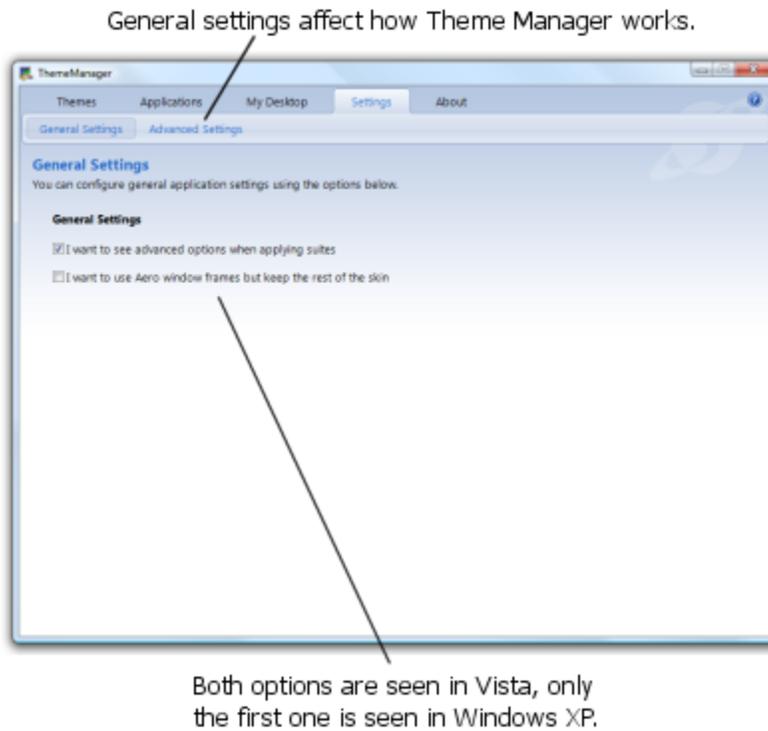
Once you are done adding elements to your new theme, click the button. An Explorer window will open with any existing suites (themes), type in a filename. Theme Manager will add the .suite extension. Click to store the theme on your hard-drive. (Click or to abort.) If you change to the "Themes" menu tab, then click on "Suites", your new theme is now listed.

Open Existing Theme

If you ever want to change a theme you created, click and an Explorer window will open displaying any in that folder. Select the desired theme (suite) or browse to the correct folder, select the theme and click . (Click or to abort.)

8. Settings: General Settings

The "General Settings" sub-tab, under the "Settings" menu tab has options that affect how Theme Manager works. On Microsoft Vista, both options are visible, however on Windows XP only the first option is available.

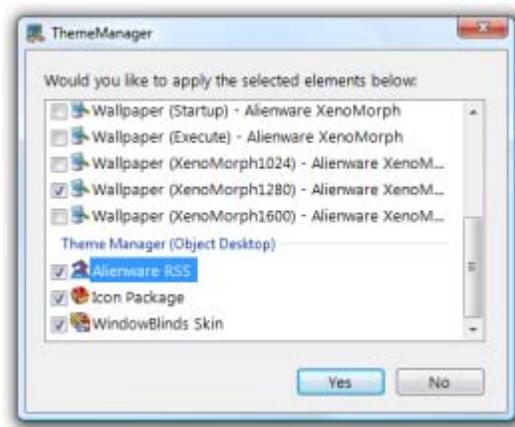


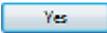
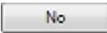
General Settings Quick Reference

Option	What it does...
I want to see advanced options when applying suites.	<p>Checked, this will display a dialog box listing the elements in the theme/suite you are applying to your computer. This allows you to check (select) / uncheck (deselect) which elements are applied.</p> <p>Unchecked, (default) you will not see the dialog box and the theme/suite will be applied as normal.</p>
I want to use Aero window frames but keep the rest of the skin.	<p>(Windows Vista feature only.)</p> <p>Checked, transparent Aero window frames will be used on all window frames, overriding any applied skin/theme.</p> <p>Unchecked, (default) no transparent Aero frames, the skin/theme (suite) will apply whatever skin it has for frames.</p>



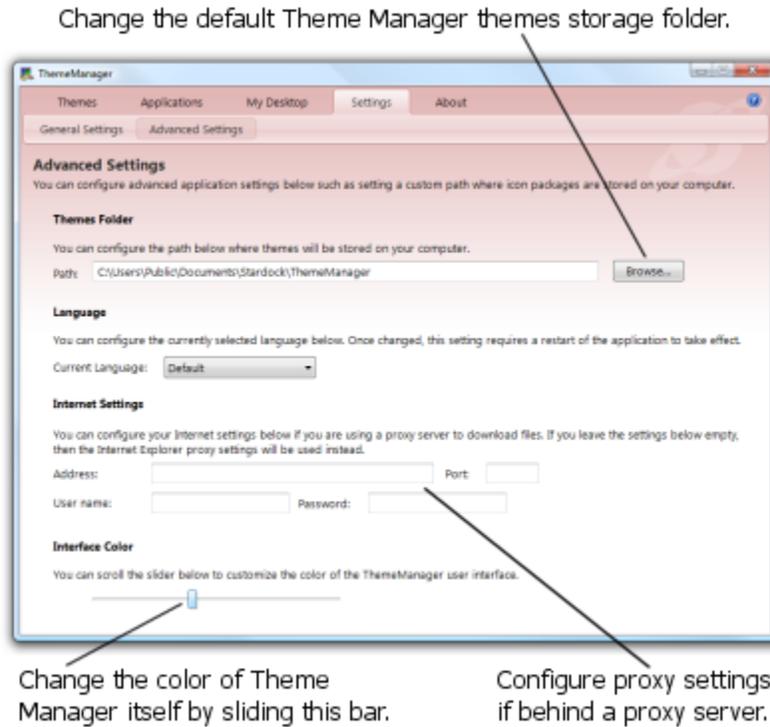
After selecting "Apply Theme" on the Theme - Suites tab for a suite, this Advanced Options dialog box was displayed.



Check/uncheck boxes, then click  to apply the theme/suite to the desktop. (Click  or  to abort.)

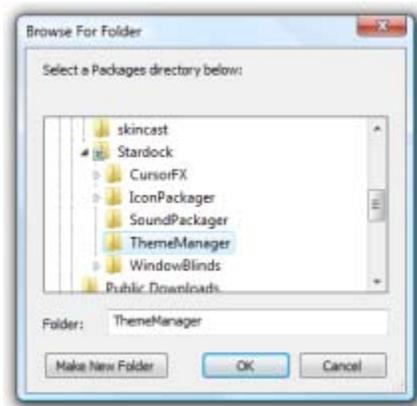
9. Settings: Advanced Settings

The Advanced Setting sub-tab allows you to change: the folder where Theme Manager stores themes, the language the user interface uses (only English is supported at this time), setting Internet Settings if you are behind a Proxy Server (i.e. used in businesses), and change the color of the user interface.



Themes Folder

If you would like to change the path where themes are stored, click the **Browse...** button to open a dialog box. Then browse to the desired drive and folder and select it. If you would like to create a new folder, click on the folder where you want it to appear, then click **Make New Folder** and a new folder will be created. Name it as desired, then click on it to select it. Click **OK** to accept the selected folder, then click **Apply changes**. (Click **Cancel** or **X** to abort.)



Language

Clicking the "Default" pull-down menu allows you to change what language is used in Theme Manager. Changing the language will require restarting Theme Manager. After changing the change, click **Apply changes**. (Click  to abort and close Theme Manager.)

Note: As of Theme Manager v3.09 (Feb. 2009), only English was supported. Newer versions may add additional languages.

Internet Settings

If you there is a proxy server between you and the internet and you are not able to get to the internet with Theme Manager. Contact your network administrator for the proxy server settings, so you can enter them into Theme Manager. This will allow you to download themes, etc. from the internet. Proxy servers are commonly use in businesses. After entering the settings, click **Apply changes**. (Click  to abort and close Theme Manager.)

Interface Color

You can change the color of Theme Manager's user interface. The user interface are the windows, tabs, buttons, forms, dialog boxes, etc. that make up Theme Manager. Simply move the  slider with your mouse, by left-clicking & holding down the button as you drag the  slider to the desired position (color). As you move it, the color will change. Click **Apply changes** when you find the right color. (Even if you do not click **Apply changes**, the color change will still take effect.)

To change the color back to default, move the slider  to the far left.

10. About

The About screen displays the Theme Manager logo & link to the Stardock web site. Clicking either will open your web browser and display the Stardock web site. Below the logo is the version number of Theme Manager (i.e. v3.09.059 (x86)). This information is needed when communicating with Stardock technical support. Check Impulse for updates to Theme Manager.

Clicking either the logo or web address will open your web browser & display the Stardock site.



The version number of Theme Manager, helpful if talking to technical support