

# **RapidGuide<sup>TM</sup>** **v1.0**

## **Technical Brief**

**January 2005**

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## What is RapidGuide?

**RapidGuide v1.0** is XStream Software's 100% programming-free **Performance Support and Guidance Technology**. It delivers dynamic knowledge support in the form of step-by-step instructional guidance sessions displayed on the user's live desktop. Each guidance session functions like an online teacher or coach who guides the user with step-by-step text/audio instructions (and supporting screen snapshots) as the user performs a real-time task within a live application.

All information within RapidGuide is organized as a searchable list of topics and subtopics that users can access. These topics and subtopics represent the simple and complex tasks that users need guidance on or help with in a software application. For each topic or subtopic, the developer records a series of sequential steps from any live desktop or web application (representing a live task to be completed).

When the developer records a task within RapidGuide, the system creates two files simultaneously. The first file is used to provide real-time guidance (i.e., text or audio-based instructions and supporting screen snapshots that guide the user step by step in performing a live task on the desktop); this guidance file can be edited/enhanced using the elements provided within RapidGuide. The second file is a "Show Me" simulation or "movie" of desktop activity that demonstrates the same steps that the end user must perform on the live screen as part of the guidance session; this simulation file can be edited/enhanced using the elements provided within XStream's **RapidBuilder** technology.

RapidBuilder is XStream's advanced simulation-authoring technology. RapidGuide and RapidBuilder are independent software technologies that can also work together. A developer using RapidGuide may also acquire RapidBuilder and use it to edit/enhance the simulation (.RBX) files generated from recorded guidance sessions in RapidGuide. When a recorded simulation file is accessed from within RapidGuide, the system automatically launches RapidBuilder (assuming RapidBuilder is installed on the system) and displays the simulation file so that it can be edited using the large variety of objects, properties, events, and feature sets provided within RapidBuilder.

**NOTE:** For information on the features and capabilities of RapidBuilder, see the **RapidBuilder v3.1 Technical Brief** and **RapidBuilder v3.1 Deluxe Technical Brief**. These documents (in .PDF format) are available for downloading on XStream's web site ([www.xstreamsoftware.com/downloads.htm](http://www.xstreamsoftware.com/downloads.htm)). They may also be acquired by contacting XStream Software via e-mail at [info@xstreamsoftware.com](mailto:info@xstreamsoftware.com).

For each topic/subtopic created in RapidGuide, the developer may also assign multiple **Associated Knowledge Documents (AKDs)**, which are supplementary documents or files (of any type or extension) that the user may access to obtain additional information or related knowledge about the topic/subtopic.

During playback, upon searching for and locating the desired topic or subtopic, the user is provided with step-by-step instructions (as text or audio or both) required to perform the task(s) within the application. The user can work with these step-by-step instructions in two (2) modes:

### 1. "Guide Me" Mode

In "**Guide Me**" mode, the user receives instructional guidance as he/she works with one or more desktop or web applications in the live Windows environment. On the live desktop, a sequential list of text/audio instructions is presented to the user. Displayed with each instruction is a supporting screen snapshot (which serves a visual aid and provides a context for performing the step). By browsing through the instructions and performing each live step as directed, the user is guided step by step in accomplishing a live task.

### 2. "Show Me" Mode

In "**Show Me**" mode, the user views a recorded simulation of how a task or a set of tasks (pertaining to the topic or subtopic selected by the user) can be performed within an application. This simulation

can be interactive (where the user performs mouse and keyboard actions during the simulation), non-interactive (where the user does not perform any actions during the simulation), or a combination of interactive and non-interactive elements.

It is important to note that a simulation is a pre-recorded set of activities that is being played by the user. Whereas the “**Guide Me**” mode presents the user with a series of instructions on the live screen in order to guide the user in performing a series of live steps, the “**Show Me**” mode plays a pre-recorded “movie” or “simulation” that shows the user how each step is performed and the result of each step. Users can choose to replay the simulations as many times as needed to learn how to complete the task(s) before (or instead of) using the “**Guide Me**” mode to be guided through the steps on the live screen.

RapidGuide essentially offers a significant enhancement to the current industry-standard help files provided within software applications. These help files typically provide a Table of Contents, an alphabetical Index, and a search/find capability to locate specific topics for which help is desired. This help is primarily in the form of topic-based information. RapidGuide enhances this help by offering real-time guidance (which is like a teacher or a coach guiding you step-by-step in performing a task) and “Show Me” capability (which is like playing a pre-recorded “movie” that can have interactive or non-interactive elements).

## The Components of RapidGuide

The **RapidGuide** technology is made up of 2 components or parts: **RapidGuide** itself (the design component) and **RapidViewer** (the playing component).

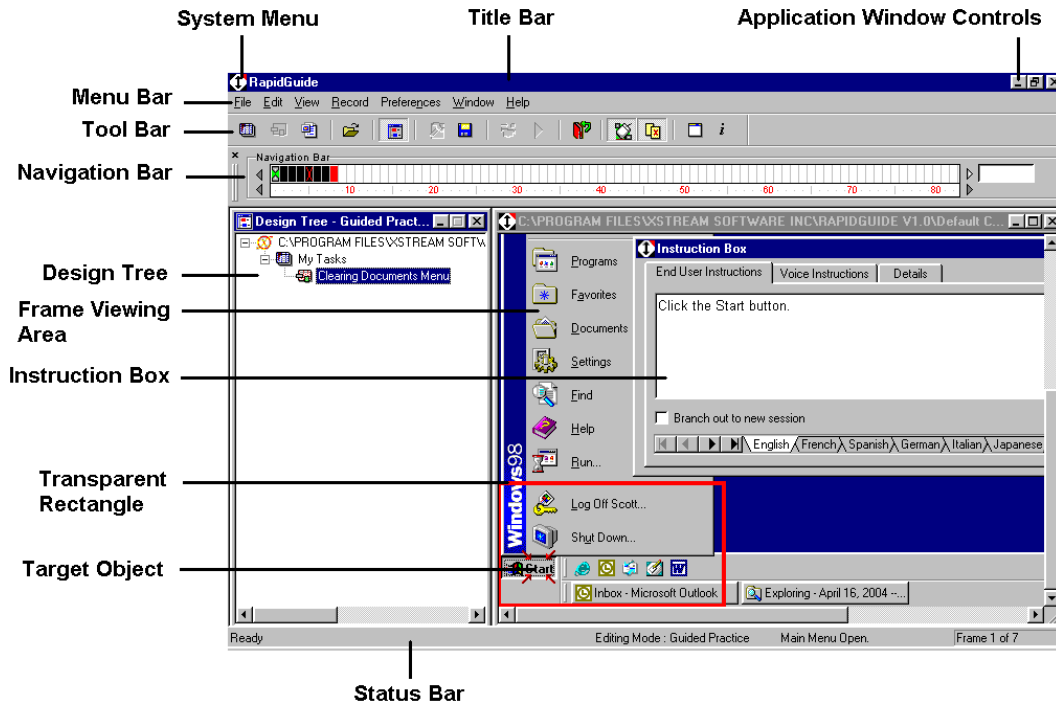
In addition, XStream’s web-based Learning Management System, **XStream RapidShare LMS**, may be used to manage and track RapidGuide files.

Here is a quick overview of each of these components:

1. **RapidGuide** – Enables designers to create topics and subtopics representing tasks/procedures for which guidance or help is required. Each topic/subtopic is populated with information by recording a live task performed in one or more Windows-based software applications. The recorded task is automatically generated as both a step-by-step guidance session and an interactive/non-interactive simulation. Designers can also link each topic/subtopic to supplementary Associated Knowledge Documents (AKDs).
2. **RapidViewer** – Enables end users to open local or web-based RapidGuide (.NWZ) files in order to run guidance sessions and interactive/non-interactive simulations as well as access supplementary AKDs.
3. **XStream RapidShare LMS** – Enables system administrators to create user and group and specify/control user and group access to RapidGuide Categories, topics, subtopics, and AKDs.

## **RapidGuide**

**RapidGuide** is the design component used to create RapidGuide Categories populated with a series of topics and subtopics. For each topic and subtopic, the developer will record a session by capturing a set of live interactions with the Windows environment and application(s). The captured session will be generated as both an instructional guidance file (for use by the “**Guide Me**” mode) and a simulation file (for use by the “**Show Me**” mode). The developer may also specify a list of Associated Knowledge Documents (AKDs) for each topic/subtopic.



**Figure 1: RapidGuide Interface**

The basic procedure for working with **RapidGuide** is as follows:

1. Create a RapidGuide Category (.BOK) file containing a list of topics and subtopics (each representing a specific task for which guidance or help is required).

**NOTE:** A RapidGuide topic or subtopic can also contain multiple branches. Each branch may be populated with its own guidance session representing a different way of accomplishing or completing the topic/subtopic. As a result, during playback of the guidance session for the topic or subtopic, the end user may be presented with several different choices representing different paths or “branches” (i.e., alternate methods) that ultimately lead to the completion of the task. For more details, see **Topic/Subtopic Branching** later in this document.

2. Each topic and subtopic is populated with information by capturing a RapidGuide session. Select a topic or subtopic, and then capture your live interactions with the Windows environment and application in order to create a RapidGuide session for the selected topic/subtopic. During capturing of the RapidGuide session, you will perform the steps (which may include mouse clicks, keystrokes, and mouse movements) required to accomplish a specific task within one or more particular software applications.
3. Once all the steps have been performed, stop the capturing. Both a Guidance Session (.SES) file and a Simulation (.RBX) file will be automatically generated from the captured RapidGuide session.
4. In **RapidGuide**, you may perform the following editing tasks:
  - In **Guided Practice** editing mode, you may edit the Guidance Session (.SES) file. For each captured step in the session file, you may assign text instructions (in one or more languages), add recorded voice-overs (audio), and add supplementary details (providing additional information or further explanation about the step to be performed). For more details, see **Editing a Guidance Session File in RapidGuide** later in this document.
  - In **Simulation** editing mode, you may launch the **RapidBuilder\*** simulation-authoring tool in order to edit the Simulation (.RBX) file. The .RBX file contains recorded desktop activity (including

recorded mouse clicks, mouse pointer movements, and keystrokes) showing how the on-screen actions are performed. In **RapidBuilder**, the .RBX file may be enhanced by adding graphics, text boxes, instruction boxes, multimedia elements (such as sound and video), draw objects (for creating visual effects using lines, shapes, color, etc), and other objects/elements.

**\*NOTE: RapidGuide** can be used with or without **RapidBuilder**. The simulation files recorded by **RapidGuide** are ready made and do not require any editing in order to be played. However, a developer using **RapidGuide** has the option of acquiring **RapidBuilder** at any point in time if he/she wishes to customize and enhance the recorded simulations using the many features and options available in **RapidBuilder**.

5. Specify a list of Associated Knowledge Documents (AKDs) pertaining to the selected topic or subtopic.
6. Repeat steps 2 to 5 for each topic/subtopic in the RapidGuide Category (.BOK) file.
7. Save the category file as a **RapidViewer (.NWZ)** file. As the main output file for the RapidGuide Category, the .NWZ file contains the RapidGuide Category's list of topics and subtopics, links to the guidance session and simulation files for each topic/subtopic, and links to the AKDs associated with each topic/subtopic.
8. Publish the .NWZ file to XStream RapidShare LMS (where it may be accessed by authorized end users logging in with valid login ID names and passwords), or deploy the .NWZ file to another location on a local or LAN/WAN drive (where it may be accessed as a regular standalone file not connected to XStream RapidShare LMS).

## System Requirements for RapidGuide

The requirements for installing and using RapidGuide include the following:

- Microsoft Windows 98, NT, 2000, ME, or XP
- Intel Pentium 400 MHZ (or higher) processor
- Minimum 64 MB of RAM (128 MB recommended)
- Minimum 100 MB free disk space
- Minimum 16-bit color support on the machine
- Sound Card and Headset with Microphone or Speakers (if adding audio to session files)
- RapidBuilder – This is XStream's simulation-authoring application. It is required if the developer wishes to edit the simulation (.RBX) files generated in RapidGuide. Note that RapidBuilder is an independent software application that must be acquired separately from RapidGuide.

## Editing a Guidance Session File in RapidGuide

A guidance session (.SES) file contains a series of recorded steps (mouse clicks and/or keystrokes) for accomplishing a live application task.

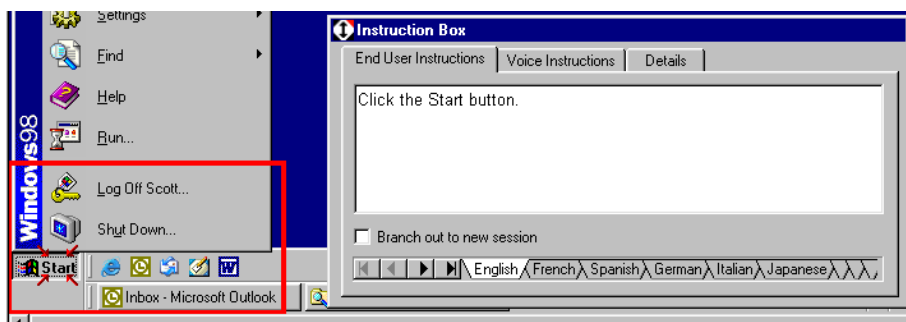
The captured steps within the .SES file are displayed as a series of screens/frames. On each frame, there is a captured screen snapshot illustrating the action required to complete the step. This screen snapshot serves two purposes. First, it provides the developer with an image of the recorded step so that he/she has a context for adding text/audio instructions explaining how to perform the step. Second, it acts as a visual aid for the end user performing the step during playback of the guidance session. Each text/audio instruction presented to the end user during playback is accompanied by a supporting screen snapshot,

which illustrates the instruction and provides the end user with a helpful visual aid for performing the live step.

Through the **Instruction Box** provided on each frame, the developer may add text instructions, voice/audio instructions, and supplementary details.

### Text Instructions

The developer may enter text instructions (explaining how to perform the step) on the **End User Instructions** tab of the **Instruction Box**.



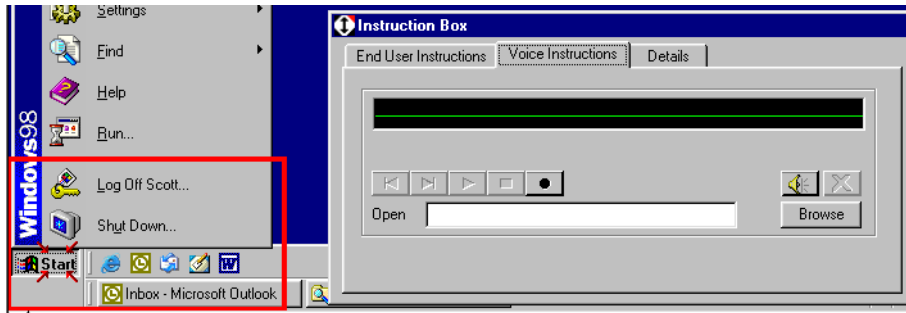
**Figure 2: Text Instructions for Captured Guidance Step**

### NOTES

- Instructions may be added in **multiple languages**. Within each Instruction Box, there are various language tabs. These tabs are provided so that the developer may enter the same set of instructions in different languages. For each language tab selected, the developer may re-enter the text instruction, voice/audio instruction, and details in the appropriate language.
- For each recorded frame/step in the session, the portion of the screen snapshot that shows the relevant user action (i.e., mouse click or keystroke) is highlighted with a **transparent rectangle**. This is illustrated in **Figure 2** above. This highlighted portion of the screen snapshot will be displayed along with the text/audio instruction during playback. By default, the transparent rectangle always highlights the area of the screen showing the mouse click or text entry recorded by the developer. However, the developer also has the option of dragging and dropping the transparent rectangle onto any other part of the captured screen in order to customize the image that will be displayed with the instruction during playback.
- For each recorded frame/step in the session, there is also a **Target Object**, which is an icon image that marks the exact screen location of the recorded mouse click or text entry action for the step. The developer may adjust the location of the **Target Object** on the screen by dragging and dropping it onto any other part of the frame area. The developer may also resize the **Target Object** (up to the size of the transparent rectangle) by clicking and dragging its selection node handles. In addition, for each individual frame, the developer may customize the icon (.ICO) image used for the **Target Object** by selecting from a list of available icon images provided by RapidGuide as well as importing and using external icon (.ICO) images.

### Voice/Audio Instructions

The developer may add voice/audio instructions on the **Voice Instructions** tab of the **Instruction Box**. During playback of the guidance session, the audio will play automatically for each step, enabling the end user to listen to voice-over instructions or other sound in addition to reading the text instructions.

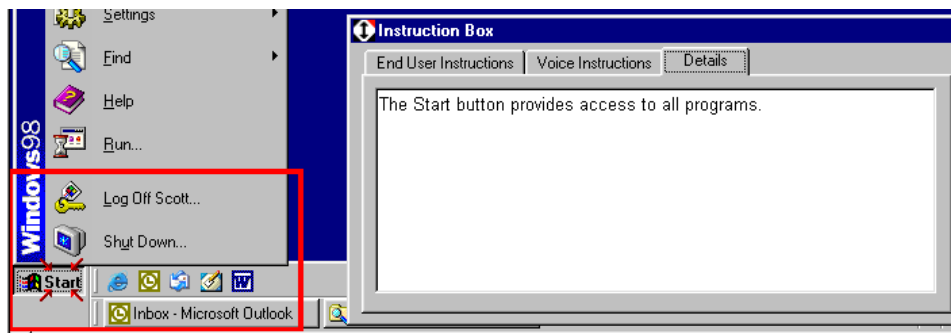


**Figure 3: Voice/Audio Instructions for Captured Guidance Step**

For each captured step, the developer may either record sound from an available audio device or link to a selected audio file.

### **Supplementary Details**

The developer may enter supplementary details on the **Details** tab of the **Instruction Box**. Details may be provided as additional information or general knowledge related to the step. During playback of the guidance session, as the end user accesses each instruction, he/she will have the option of viewing the additional details for that instruction.



**Figure 4: Details for Captured Guidance Step**

### **Topic/Subtopic Branching**

In RapidGuide, a topic or subtopic (containing a series of sequential steps for completing a given task) can branch out to multiple guidance sessions each representing different ways to accomplish or complete the task or a portion of the task. Therefore, during playback of a guidance session, the end user may be presented with several different choices representing different paths or "branches" (i.e., alternate methods) that ultimately lead to the completion of the required task.

Branching is an extremely powerful feature that allows developers to create flexible guidance sessions that apply to different scenarios and allow users to practice and learn multiple methods of completing the same task.

There are several ways for the developer to add branches to a topic or subtopic:

#### **1. Starting a Topic/Subtopic with Branches**

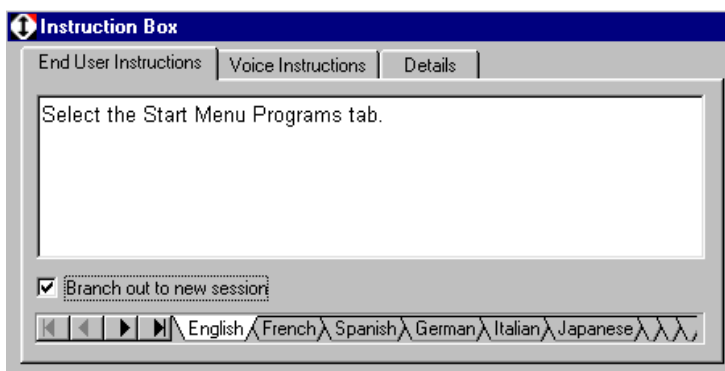
The developer may choose to begin a topic/subtopic with branches. This means that instead of populating the topic/subtopic itself with guidance instructions, the topic/subtopic will start by linking out to branched sessions (each populated with a different set of authored instructions/steps for

accomplishing the task). During playback, as soon as the end user starts the session, he/she is presented with a list of different available options/paths (i.e., the various branched sessions authored by the developer) to choose from. Each choice represents a series of guided instructions that leads to the completion of the same task. The end user chooses one of the options and then performs the specified steps.

## 2. Branching Out from Within a Topic/Subtopic

The developer may choose to add branches at the end of a series of guided instructions within a topic/subtopic. During playback, the end user will start the topic/subtopic by performing a series of guided instructions. At the end of this series of instructions, the end user will be presented with a list of different available options/paths (i.e., the various branched sessions authored by the developer) for completing the remaining portion of the task. The end user chooses one of the options and then performs the specified steps to complete the remainder of the task.

To branch out from within a topic/subtopic, the developer selects the “**Branch out to new session**” option on the **Instruction Box** located on the final instruction frame/screen in the session. The developer then creates new branched sessions (each populated with a series of guided instructions) for the topic/subtopic. During playback, once the end user reaches the last instruction for the topic/subtopic, he/she will be able to choose one of the available branched sessions to complete the topic/subtopic.



**Figure 5: Branching to a New Session**

The developer may enable the “**Branch out to new session**” option for any instruction frame in the topic/subtopic. However, this frame will then become the last frame in the topic/subtopic (as any remaining frames that follow this frame will be automatically disregarded and removed from the generation of the session). This is because the developer may only branch out to new sessions at the beginning or end of a topic/subtopic (and not in the middle of the topic/subtopic).

## 3. Sub-Branching

The developer may also create sub-branches (i.e., new sessions that branch out from other branched sessions). Sub-branches may be added at the end of a series of guided instructions within a branched session (that in turn has been branched from a topic/subtopic). Branching out from within a branched session is accomplished in the same way as branching out from within a topic/subtopic (explained in #2 above).

## Auto Advancing

For each guidance session created in RapidGuide, the developer may enable or disable the “**Auto Advance**” option.

The "**Auto Advance**" option automates the navigation from one instruction to the next during playback of the guidance session. Instead of the user having to manually navigate to each subsequent instruction by clicking the **Next Instruction** button, RapidViewer will automatically advance to the next instruction in the session each time the user performs a mouse click or keystroke action anywhere on the live screen.

If the "**Auto Advance**" option is enabled, the end user will automatically advance through the instructions by performing clicking or typing actions on the live screen. In addition, at any time during playback, the end user has the option of pausing the **Auto Advance** feature (by clicking the **Pause** button provided) and playing/resuming the **Auto Advance** feature (by clicking the **Play** button provided).

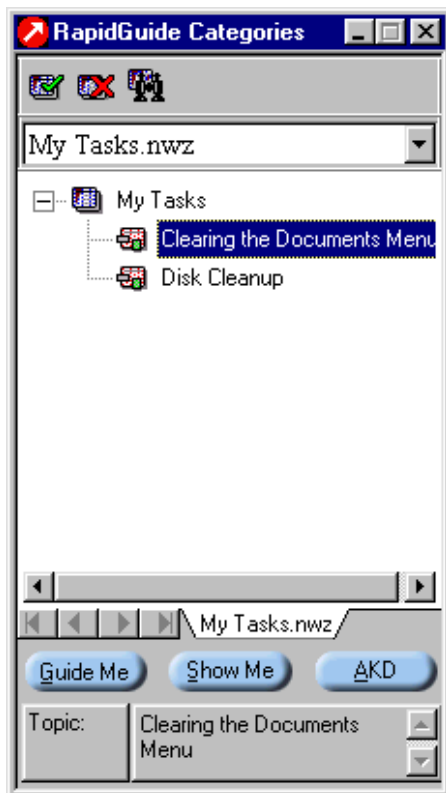
If the "**Auto Advance**" option is disabled, the end user will have to manually navigate through the instructions (by clicking the **Next Instruction** button).

## **RapidViewer**

**RapidViewer** is the Windows-based client used by end users to open local or web-based RapidViewer (.NWZ) files in order to run guidance sessions and interactive/non-interactive simulations as well as access supplementary Associated Knowledge Documents (AKDs).

After opening a RapidViewer (.NWZ) file, the end user searches for and selects an available topic or subtopic from the **RapidGuide Categories** view of the **RapidViewer** window.

**NOTE:** Once an .NWZ file has been opened, the user may connect to additional .NWZ files and display their topics and subtopics individually in the **RapidGuide Categories** view. The user may disconnect from any .NWZ file at any time. In addition, the **RapidGuide Categories** view includes a search engine, which enables the user to quickly locate specific topics and subtopics within the current expanded category.



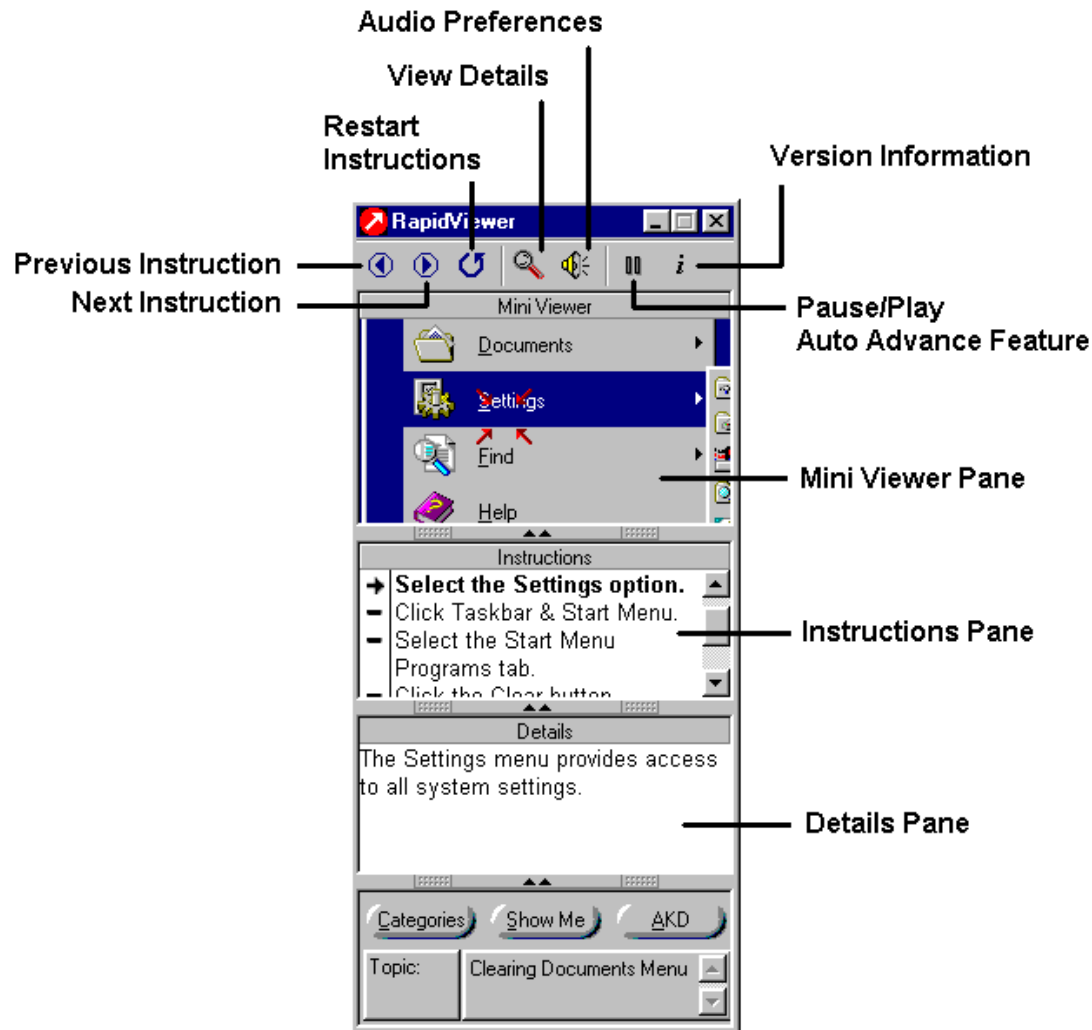
**Figure 6: RapidGuide Categories View of RapidViewer Window**

Once a topic or subtopic is selected, the user may access the **Guide Me**, **Show Me**, and **AKD** modes.

### “Guide Me” Mode

With a topic or subtopic selected, the user may click the “**Guide Me**” button to launch the guidance session, which uses on-screen, step-by-step text instructions/voice-overs to guide the end user as he/she performs a set of actions within the live Windows environment.

Once the “**Guide Me**” button is clicked, the **Instructions** view of the **RapidViewer** program window is displayed and animated to the bottom right of the screen.







**Figure 7: Instructions View of RapidViewer Window**

The **Instructions** view of **RapidViewer** lists a set of guidance instructions outlining a series of specific, sequential steps that must be performed to accomplish a real-time task. By browsing through the instructions and performing each live step as directed, the user is guided step by step in performing the live task.

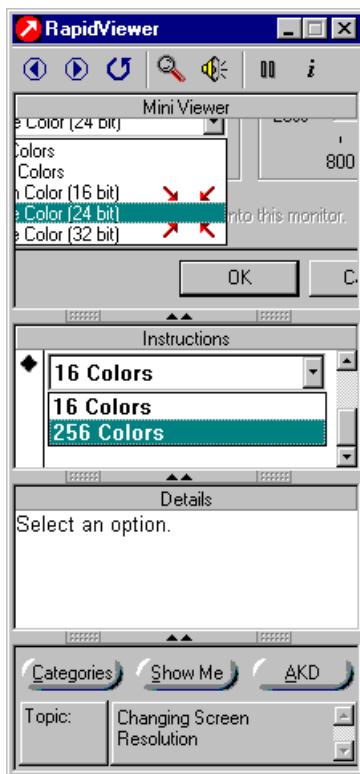
**NOTE:** The **RapidViewer** window remains on top of all application windows on the screen. If the **RapidViewer** window is obscuring any part of the live application where the user needs to perform

actions, the user can simply move the **RapidViewer** window to another part of the screen by dragging its title bar.

The **Instructions** view of **RapidViewer** includes the following components:



- **Instructions Pane** – Contains the text instructions outlining the sequential steps to be performed on the live screen. These are the instructions that the developer specified for each recorded frame while editing the session in RapidGuide. The user may navigate backward and forward through the instructions by clicking the **Previous Instruction**  and **Next Instruction**  buttons at the top of the window. There are two viewing modes available for the **Instructions** pane:
  - **List Mode** – Displays all of the instructions in a scrollable list. This is the default viewing mode, and it is activated when the  button is clicked.
  - **Single Mode** – Displays only the current instruction; all other instructions are hidden from view. Single mode is activated when the  button is clicked.



For each instruction containing links to branched sessions, the **Instructions** pane will display the instruction as a combo box listing the user's available choices (as shown in **Figure 8** below). The user selects an item from the drop-down list. As soon as a selection is made, the user is immediately branched out to the next series of instructions. Each branch selection takes the user from the current topic to a different set of instructions, and the user cannot return back to the previous set of instructions.






**Figure 8: Branched Instruction**

- **Mini Viewer Pane** – Displays a supporting screen snapshot illustrating the current instruction (in order to provide the user with a visual aid and context for performing the step). The image shown for each instruction is a portion of the screen snapshot recorded and selected by the developer. The screen snapshot may also display a pointer image (customized by the developer) showing the exact


screen location that requires the mouse click or keystroke action. The **Mini Viewer** may be hidden by clicking the  button and displayed by clicking the  button.


- **Details Pane** – Displays supplementary information (provided by the developer) related to the current instruction. The **Details** pane may be hidden by clicking the  button and displayed by clicking the  button.

**NOTE:** If details are available for the current instruction, the **View Details**  icon at the top of the **Instructions** view will be enabled (which lets the user know there are details available for the current instruction if the **Details** pane is currently hidden). If there are no details available for the current instruction, the **View Details**  icon will be grayed out.

- **Audio Instructions** – For each step in the session, there may also be an audio instruction in addition to the text instruction. When each instruction becomes active, any sound clip or audio file that has been configured for that instruction will play automatically. The end user may adjust the sound levels using the built-in sound mixer (accessed by clicking the **Audio Preferences**  button).

## NOTES

- At any point while navigating through the instructions, the user may click the **Restart Instructions**  button to return back to the first instruction in the session.
- Depending on how the session has been configured by the developer, navigation through the instructions may be automatic or manual. If the "**Auto Advance**" feature has been enabled for the session, navigation from one instruction to the next will be automatic. This means that each time the user performs a mouse click or keystroke action anywhere on the live screen, RapidViewer will automatically advance to the next instruction in the session. In addition, at any time during playback, the end user has the option of pausing the **Auto Advance** feature (by clicking the **Pause** button provided) and playing/resuming the **Auto Advance** feature (by clicking the **Play** button provided).

If the "**Auto Advance**" feature has been disabled for the session, navigation will be manual. This means that the user must manually navigate from one instruction to the next by clicking the **Next Instruction**  button.

## “Show Me” Mode

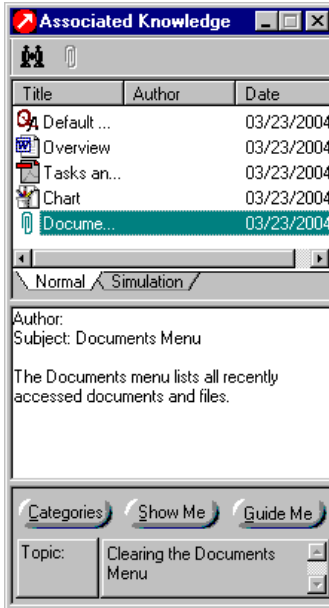
With a topic or subtopic selected, the user may click the “**Show Me**” button to launch a desktop simulation (.RBX) file, which demonstrates the same steps that the end user must perform on the live screen as part of the guidance session.

Before or after running the guidance session, the end user may run the .RBX file in order to view a realistic simulation of the steps being performed. Depending on the settings used to record it, the simulation may be interactive (in which the end user interacts with the simulation by performing mouse clicks and/or keystrokes), non-interactive (in which the end user simply watches the action on the screen without participating in the simulation), or a combination of interactive and non-interactive elements.

**NOTE:** The **RapidPlayer** runtime player or plug-in, which is an independent software application that is separate from **RapidViewer**, is required for the playback of .RBX files. In order for the .RBX file to run, **RapidPlayer** must be installed on the user’s machine.

## “AKD” Mode

With a topic or subtopic selected, the user may click the “**AKD**” button to display the **Associated Knowledge** view of the **RapidViewer** window, which lists all of the **Associated Knowledge Documents (AKDs)** that have been assigned to the current topic/subtopic.



**Figure 9: Associated Knowledge View of RapidViewer Window**

AKDs are supplementary documents or files (of any type or extension) that the user may access to obtain additional information or related knowledge about the currently selected topic/subtopic. An AKD may be a file of any type or extension, including MS Word (.DOC) or WordPerfect (.WPD) documents, Real Text Format (.RTF) documents, HTML (.HTML or .HTM) pages, text (.TXT, .LOG, or .BAK) files, executable (.EXE) files, graphic files, audio files, video files, and virtually any other type of file. In addition to external knowledge documents, the end user may access internal Question and Answer documents, posted notes, and external simulation (.RBX) files.

Once the user has searched for and located a topic or subtopic of interest, the user can do one of the following two things:

1. After going through the “**Guide Me**” mode or **Simulation (“Show Me”)** mode, the user can further supplement their knowledge or acquire additional information by accessing the AKDs provided for that topic or subtopic.
2. The user can bypass the “**Guide Me**” mode or **Simulation (“Show Me”)** mode and directly access the AKDs provided to obtain information with regards to the topic or subtopic.

**NOTE:** In order for an AKD to be successfully launched, its associated application viewer must be installed on the user’s machine. For example, if the user wanted to open a .DOC file, then Microsoft Word must be installed on the user’s machine.

This list of AKDs provided for a topic or subtopic can be large. A “**Search**” function is provided so that the user may locate and find AKDs based on one or more specified keywords.

## System Requirements for RapidViewer

There are two (2) versions of RapidViewer available:

- **Windows Native Version**

The Windows native version of RapidViewer is a Windows-based application, which is installed on the end user's machine and launched locally.

- **Plug-in/ActiveX Version**

The Plug-in/ActiveX Versions of RapidViewer enables users to access this application via the web browser.

The requirements for installing and using RapidViewer include the following:

- Microsoft Windows 98, NT, 2000, ME, or XP
- Intel Pentium or higher machine (PII 266 MHz or Celeron 366 MHz recommended).
- Minimum 32 MB of RAM (64 MB is recommended, depending on the operating system).
- Minimum 10 MB free disk space (More space may be required depending on the number and size of the RapidGuide files being stored and executed on the machine).
- Minimum 256 color support on the machine
- Sound Card and Headset or Speakers (if executing guidance sessions with audio)
- Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.0 (or higher) browser or Netscape 4.7 (or higher) browser
- Internet Connection – This is required if you are running RapidViewer or accessing RapidGuide content over the web.
- RapidPlayer v3.0 Runtime Player or Plug-in – This is required for playing simulation (.RBX) files generated in RapidGuide or RapidBuilder.

## Managing RapidGuide Categories with XStream RapidShare LMS

RapidGuide works with **XStream RapidShare LMS**, which is XStream Software's powerful, web-based Learning Management System (LMS) within the XStream RapidShare web environment and digital workspace. The system includes full capabilities for registering, tracking, and reporting on RapidGuide files.

XStream RapidShare LMS is a secure, feature-rich communication, collaboration, and learning management system within an easy-to-use web environment accessible to a global audience. It enables management of all types of online learning content (including SCORM content) and offline scheduled events with optional capabilities for web-based communication and collaboration.

Based on a scalable .NET architecture, XStream RapidShare LMS is available as a cost-effective **hosted service solution** (which minimizes total cost of ownership and accelerates deployment time for quick realization of benefits) or as a **non-hosted license offering**. It is the ideal web solution for any organization that needs to efficiently share and manage information and facilitate real-time communication and collaboration across the enterprise. With XStream RapidShare LMS, everyone within an organization can use the same secure system to perform administrative tasks, access assigned learning content, communicate and collaborate on any topic or project, and manage/access any type of

content or files that may be used within the organization. Full flexibility is provided to customize and organize the use of the LMS within the organization.

XStream RapidShare LMS includes the following features and capabilities:

- **Decentralized administration capabilities (with comprehensive security)** – Control the access and user rights of each administrator (i.e., each administrator may have full access to all aspects of the LMS or only partial access to certain elements within the LMS, and each administrator has defined rights that control the type of functions the administrator can perform at each level).
- **Hierarchical administration capabilities (with comprehensive security)** – Customize and organize the use of the LMS by creating multiple organizational units (with complete security for the LMS data/content within each organizational unit). Each organizational unit can contain its own users/groups, designated administrators, assigned content matter/events, user rights, etc.
- **SSL Security** – The LMS can be made accessible using either the HTTP or HTTPS protocol. The HTTPS protocol provides SSL security using 128-bit encryption, providing a completely secure environment for all transactions, including file uploads/downloads.
- **Learning Content Capabilities** – The LMS can register, track, and report on various types of learning content and SCORM content created with RapidBuilder, RapidExam, Performance Analyzer, RapidGuide, and other third-party SCORM-authoring technologies. A large variety of information and settings may be configured for each learning content matter registered in the system, including the capability to define the Start Date and Expiry Date for each learning content matter.
- **Event Capabilities** – Schedule, track, and report on offline events of all types, including instructor-led training sessions, meetings, workshops, seminars, conferences, trade shows, etc. Administrators may track the number of seats available for each scheduled event and enable registration and cancellation of registrations. Administrators may also send an event registration URL (via email or using some other method) to enable users to self-register for the event using the URL. Other capabilities include alternate scheduled event registrations, event roster generation (along with other reports), and the ability to change an event's status (open, completed, or cancelled).
- **Self-Registration Capabilities** – Users without accounts are able to self-register in the system by creating their own accounts online. An account creation confirmation e-mail (containing login credentials) is automatically sent to a user after he/she registers.
- **Required Learning Paths/Curriculums** – Administrators may define learning paths containing assigned content matter/events that must be completed by the user.
- **Recommended Learning Curriculums** – Users may also access supplementary assigned content matter/events not included as part of required learning paths.
- **Learning Catalogs** – Administrators may create defined learning catalogs containing groupings of online and offline content matter. For each learning catalog created, administrators can also define if assigned users can directly access the online content or if they need to request access to it. Access requests are made via means of notifications that are fulfilled by administrators assigning the user to the requested content matter. The user then receives a confirmation message stating that the content matter has been assigned to the user.
- **E-mail Notification Capabilities** – E-mail reminders (i.e., reminder messages automatically sent to participants before the content matter is taken) and e-mail notifications (i.e., results automatically sent to participants after the content matter has been taken) can be configured for learning paths and each type of content matter within XStream RapidShare LMS. Administrators can configure the e-mail messages for each type of content matter separately and define who has access to the different e-mail reminders/notifications that have been configured.

- **Prerequisites** – Administrators may establish prerequisites for each content matter (including conditions such as progress, time taken, score, and attendance at the content matter level) before a user may launch/register for the content matter. This controls the conditions that must be met by the user before being able to launch/register for a content matter.
- **Concurrent Logins** – Administrators may designate any user account as having the capability to log in multiple times (i.e., log in concurrently from different machines). By default, a user can only log in once with a user ID or password. However, with this "Concurrent Login" option selected, a user's login ID and password can be used to log in multiple times. This enables a user account to be used for logging in to the system anonymously (i.e., users do not have to disclose their personal login ID and password). This capability is useful for creating public courses and training materials, anonymous surveys/polls, etc.
- **Bookmarking Capability** – While logged in to a registered RapidBuilder file, RapidExam file, or SCORM v1.2 course, an authenticated user may stop at and mark a specific screen/frame before exiting in order to return to that location upon the next login.
- **Reporting Capabilities** – Over 60 predefined reports are available. User reports may be generated from the user, group, or department-level points of view, and content matter reports may be generated from the content matter/event or learning path points of view. Reports may be viewed online, printed, and exported to other formats (including Excel).
- **Customize User Interface Elements** – Customized banner images and welcome pages may be specified for each organizational unit within the LMS. Other interface elements (such as fonts, colors, etc.) may be customized via Cascading Style Sheets (CSS).
- **Offline Exams** – System administrators may generate RapidExam exams (.EXM files) and performance exams (.RPE files) as offline exams. Assigned users can take offline exams without being connected to the LAN or the Internet. Upon completing the offline exam, the end user transfers the results to an administrator, who then uploads the results to the LMS for tracking and reporting purposes.
- **Archiving Capabilities** – The system can automatically store all deleted content matter/events and associated data in an archived location. The archived content may be subsequently restored to the LMS or permanently removed.
- **Section 508 Compliance** – Includes full support for the accessibility requirements specified in Section 508 of the U.S Rehabilitation Act. XStream RapidShare LMS is a 508-compliant technology that may be fully accessed by users with physical disabilities or limited mobility.
- **Unicode Support** – Includes support for the Unicode character set (for encoding multiple written languages).
- **Multi-Language Support** – Supports English, French, Danish, and Norwegian (with upcoming support for additional languages).

In addition to its learning management elements, XStream RapidShare LMS provides **optional** access to powerful Communication and Collaboration Capabilities, which enable users to share files, collaborate on the development of learning content and other types of content, and engage in live chat and discussions.

The following communication and collaboration capabilities are available as part of the LMS:

- **File Transfer/Sharing Capabilities** – These capabilities enable collaboration on the development of content matter files, images, media files, etc. Files and documents (created using any application) can be easily uploaded to the system, organized in folders and subfolders, and shared with other users.
- **Threaded Discussion Forums** – Users can initiate one-on-one, topic-based discussions with other users.

- **Interactive Chat Sessions** – Users can initiate synchronous text-based chat sessions with other users on demand. One or more invited internal users or external users may join the chat. Internal LMS users invited for a chat may be notified via animated marquee to join a chat in progress. External users may participate in chatting by receiving a URL that they can use. Each chat session can be saved and made available to other users.
- **“Notify Me” Capability** – This capability allows users to keep track of changes occurring within the LMS. A user may choose to be automatically notified (by e-mail) as soon as a change occurs in a selected LMS component, or he/she may choose to receive a daily summary of all changes made to a selected LMS component or all changes made to the complete LMS.
- **Electronic Mail Facility** – Users may compose, send, receive, and store e-mail messages. Since anyone can send e-mail to the mailbox, it is particularly useful for receiving e-mail from people outside of the LMS.
- **Calendar** – Provides a mechanism for users to keep track of upcoming events or activities. Events can be organized and viewed by day, week, month, or year.
- **Notes** – Users can post general notes pertaining to the LMS.
- **Web Links** – Users can create shared links or shortcuts to Web URLs. A link is a shortcut to a web site. It allows you to specify whether a web page referred to by the link should be opened in a new window or not.
- **Comments** – Users may add comments to various objects within the LMS. Comments are user-defined annotations or notes that provide extra details, recommendations, hints, tips, or other general information to any user accessing the LMS object.
- **Live Video Conferencing or Desktop Sharing Sessions** – Users can create and conduct live video conferencing or desktop sharing sessions. These iMeeting sessions enable a user to share files and applications on his/her desktop with other members of the LMS and/or external users. They are ideal for online meetings, demonstrations, web conferences, instructor-led training sessions, seminars, support sessions, general web casts (to a large number of users), and more. A user may create an iMeeting session and then invite/add users as participants in the meeting. Invited users may be LMS members or other external users (i.e., any user who is or is not a user of XStream RapidShare LMS). When creating an iMeeting session, the user may also specify that the meeting session will be recorded. A recorded meeting will be automatically saved as a clip that can be subsequently accessed and played back by other authorized user.

## Contact Information

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