AutomaTech™

iFix

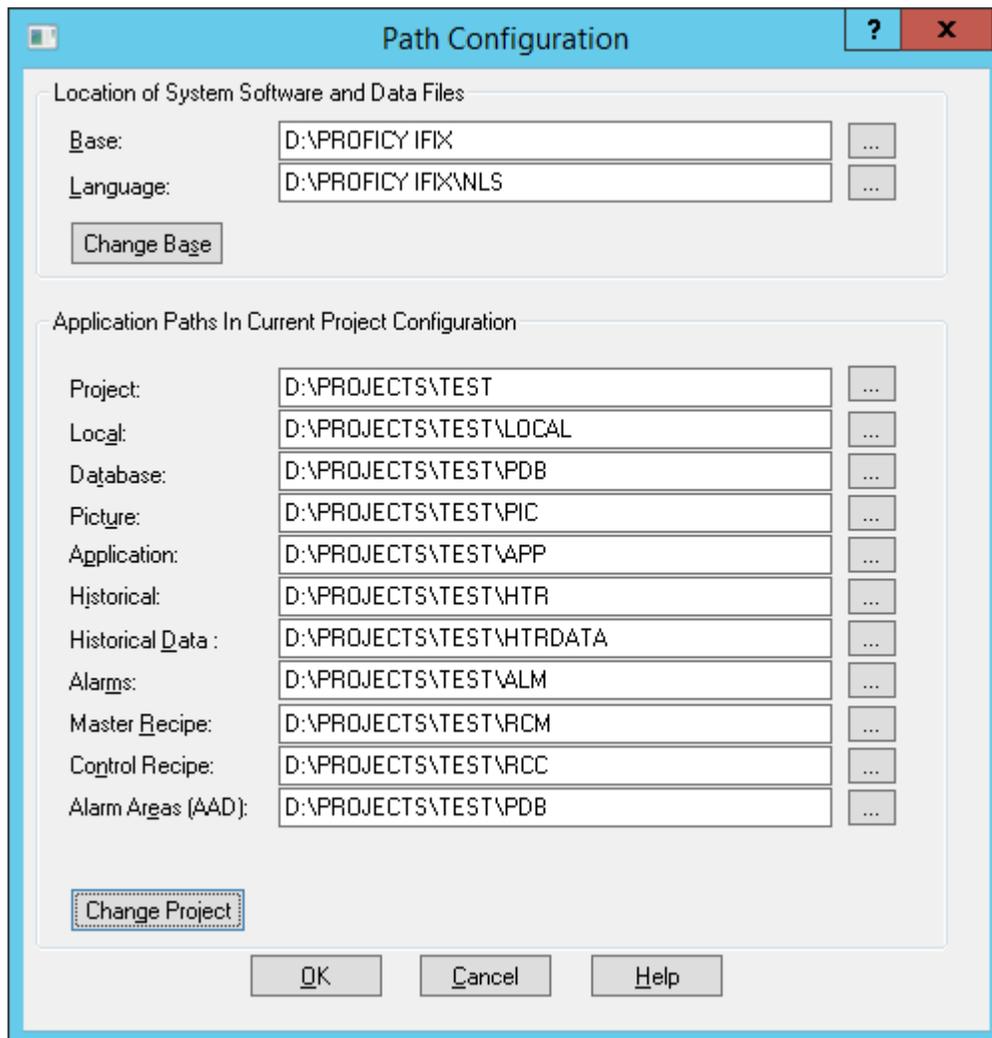# Project Management

By

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October 2016

iFix Project Management

An iFix project is a group of individual files. The PDB, schedules, and driver configurations are stored in the PDB folder. The pictures, tag groups files, custom color tables, and the global files are in the PIC folder. An iFix project is most easily managed by folder.

You cannot run more than one version of iFix on a given machine. The registry settings will be overwritten with each install. FIX32 and iFix can be run on the same machine with some care and caveats.

Project management starts with the iFix path configuration in the SCU.

All of the paths in this dialog must be a drive letter. UNC (eg., //Server1/SCADA/Pic) are not allowed.

All files saved and used by iFix will default to the paths for the current project.

All paths except those for the Base and Language can be changed after iFix is installed.

Creating a New Project:

Notes:

iFix should not be running while creating a new project. iFix cannot create the default files in the new locations.

SIMs applied after projects are created may require special attention to apply them to all projects.

Most often it will be easiest to use the iFix startup screen to build new projects

The following demonstrates using the iFix startup screen.

1) Create the destination folder:

This is where all the project specific files will be stored. All your work and engineering efforts will be stored in this folder. Once this folder is created and iFix configured for it, it is difficult to change. Therefore some care should be taken to choose a good logical name for it. I suggest something like:

"D:\Projects\Test\"

Where "D:" (if available) is a data drive local to the machine, but separate from the system (OS) drive.

Where "Projects" represents a folder where all the iFix projects on this machine will be stored. ***Note:*** *it is possible to have multiple projects on a single computer, as long as only one is running at a given time. Also it is wise to follow this construction even though it is only intended to have a single project on this computer. If there is a change in the future the structure is already in place.*

And lastly where "Test" is a name representing this particular project. It is wise to give this folder a name that will make sense to you and others in the future.

Notice that the folder names are short and have no spaces. Although there is no requirement that this be so, it does make browsing and typing easier should it be needed.

2) Use the iFix (version) icon to run the iFix start-up screen:
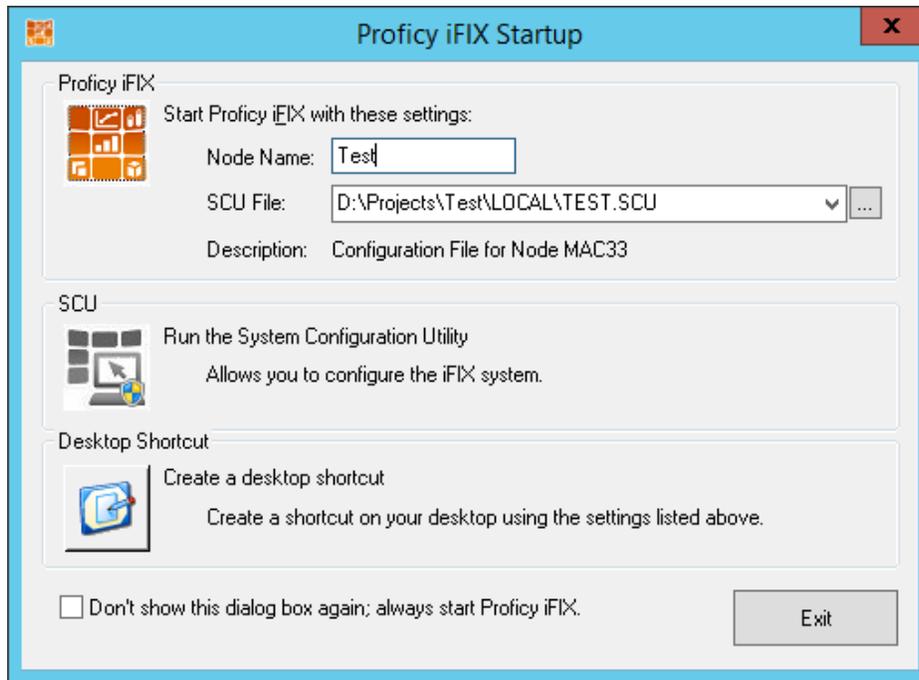
This screen is the default screen that starts up when iFix is installed. Using this we can configure all our projects. We will be able to configure them to launch directly after we have set them up.
Note: **DO NOT** check the check box at the bottom of the screen. There are only a couple reasons you would need to do this and those can be handled much later.

**3) Launch the SCU using the button on the above screen:**

There are other ways to start the SCU but we'll use the one here. If your SCU starts with any significant configuration already in place you'll have to edit a new one by selecting the menu option *File>New*.

4) Edit Paths

Change the "Paths" to point to the new one you created earlier.

Select **Configure > Paths** to view the screen at the beginning of the chapter. Browse to your by selecting the **"…"** button at the right.
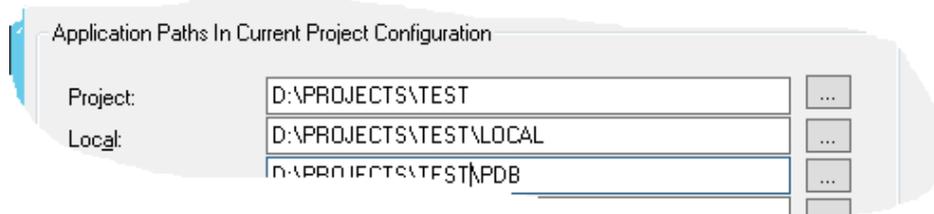
After selecting the new folder, it should appear as in the picture above.

5) Change project

Selecting the "Change Project" button will alter the paths in all the subsequent folders. Also a dialog box will appear:
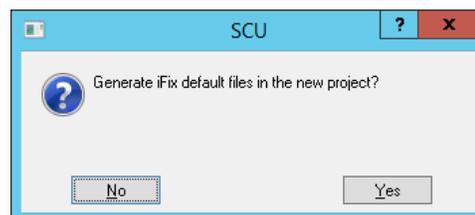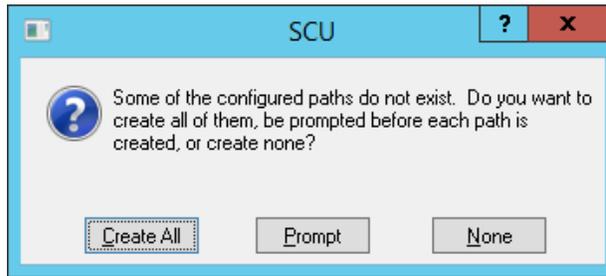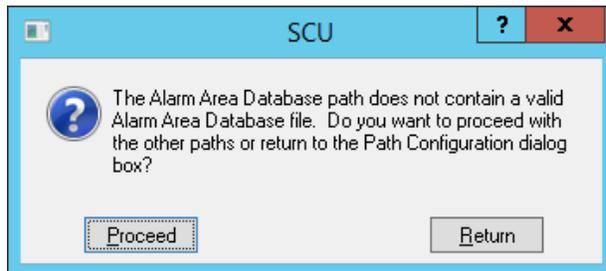

Select: Yes

This will copy all the default files from the install folder.

6) Select "OK" on the paths screen.

After selecting OK there will two dialog boxes. Read them and answer as follows:

Select: Create All

Select: Proceed

Your choices here will only change under special circumstances. You'll probably know when they arise.

7) Select the menu option "File > SAVE AS"

You will be returned to the main SCU Screen. At this point you'll want to select the menu option "File > SAVE AS". Make sure you select SAVE AS and not save. It is important to make sure that the SCU you are creating is unique to this project.

8) Saving the New SCU file.

First I always check that I'm in fact saving to the newly created LOCAL folder. I've never seen it go wrong, but I like to check!
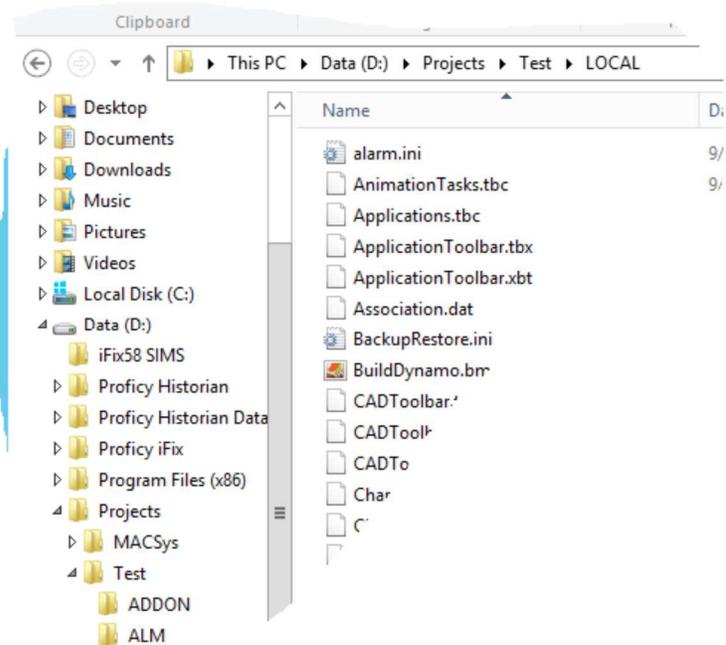
Once I've checked the folder it's time to Name the SCU File. **It is VERY important** which name you choose here. This will be the Node name for this machine and project. This node name will be how all other iFix nodes refer to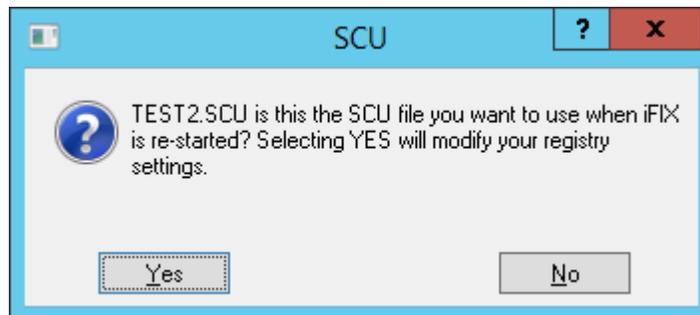 this computer. So choose a name you'll be able to use for the long haul. Also remember the node naming conventions of iFix: 8 Characters, No Spaces.

Note: When saving there is one more dialog box that pops up:
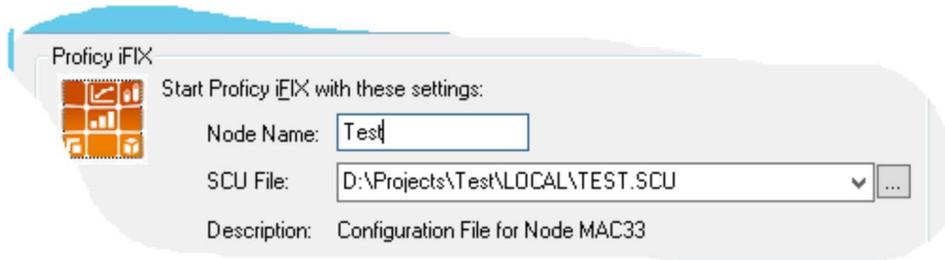

Always, Always: Click NO

This is true for almost all cases. When it is appropriate to click yes you'll know.

9) Close the SCU screen.
The initial SCU setup is complete. So you can close the screen.

10) Open the iFix screen again.
Re-open the iFix screen. Edit the top two dialog options:

Proficy iFIX
Start Proficy iFIX with these settings:
Node Name: Test
SCU File: D:\Projects\Test\LOCAL\TEST.SCU
Description: Configuration File for Node MAC33

These should reflect the new Node name, and the new SCU File. What is shown above are the defaults that will appear.

11) Create the Desktop shortcut.

After editing the above create a Desktop Shortcut with the bottom button. Give it a name.

12) Copy the shortcut to the Projects folder.

Make a copy of the desktop shortcut in the Projects folder you created earlier. This will be useful if the one on the desktop gets deleted or if you want access to a project without promoting it on the desktop.
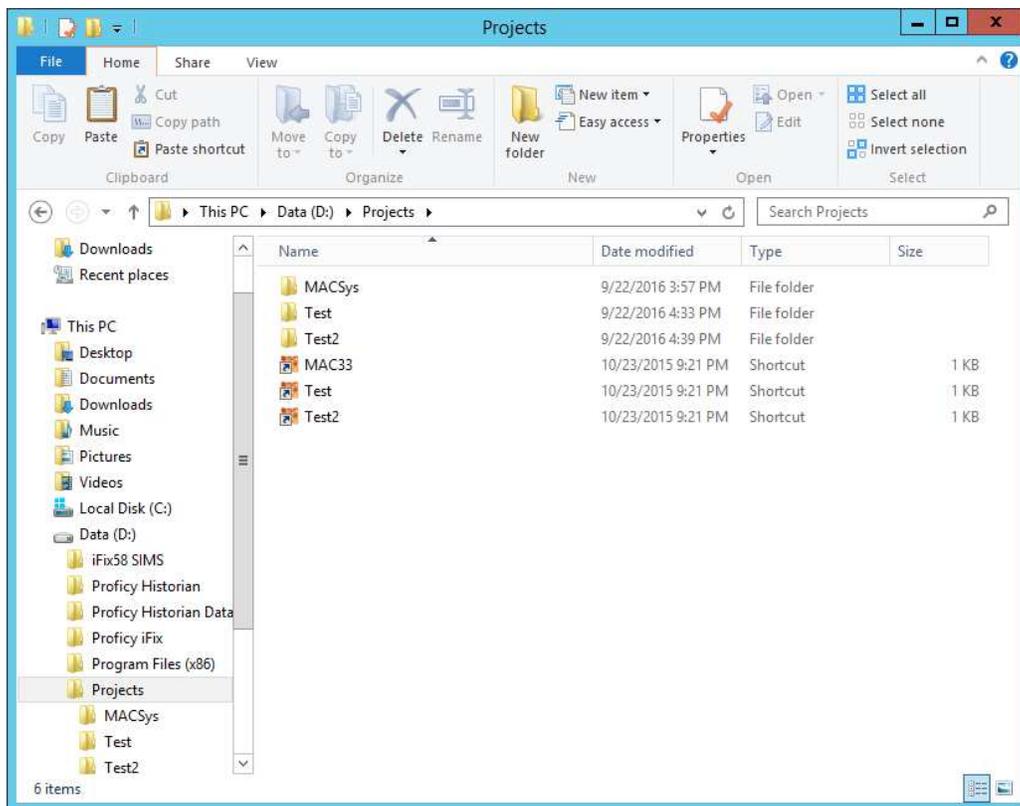
After all that you'll have a project folder that looks like the one above except that there will only be one folder and one project. The point of the picture above is that it shows that you can have and maintain multiple projects on a computer. If you follow the preceding steps you'll have an icon and folder for each project.

What's behind the shortcut

Creating the short cut above results in a standard windows shortcut with the following command line syntax:

<iFix Path>\Launch.exe   /s<SCU File to Open>   /n<Node Name to Use> /l<logical Node Name to use>

The SCU file name must include the full path.

/n represents the "local Node name"

/l (small L) represents the "Logical Name" (Optional intended for systems that are redundant)

It is often easiest to make any edits necessary in a text editor like Notepad then past them back into the shortcut.

Moving or Deploying Projects

Moving or copying projects is most often done when upgrading the version of iFix being used. This is also the most complex. So we'll handle it here, and any other purpose for moving or copying will consist of these steps or fewer.

Make sure iFix is installed and all necessary drivers as well.

Create a new project as above.

Copy the driver files to the new PDB folder (.abr, .IGS etc.).

Verify that the driver is working correctly.

Copy the Process Database & AlarmAreaDatabase to the new PDB folder (.PDB, .AAD).

Verify that the database is working correctly, You should be able to see data.

"Cherry Pick" the files you need from the PIC folder, and copy them to the new PIC folder. These files will include:

Picture files (.grf)

The User code file (User.fxg) **Note:** Only the User.fxg, leave the other .fxg files alone.

The taggroup files also need to be moved (.tgd)

Verify that the picture files are working.

If these steps are followed, moving and even upgrading projects is quite easy. It is important to check the functionality of each component at each step of the way. It is much easier to fix problems right away instead of waiting 'till the end.