Forward T Software

SMSManager

Output of SMS into Titles

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User's Guide

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Introduction

ForwardT Software provides a possibility of outputting SMS in the form of titles: the SMS, SMS2 and SMSRoll title elements (for more information see «FDTitle Designer. Title Project Editor»).

Loading of SMS to any of these title elements requires additional program. Functionality of this program depend on coordination between SMS provider and broadcasting company.

The ForwardT Software package includes the SMSManager program that is designed to load messages to the SMS/SMS2/SMSRol title elements. The messages are stored in text files located on PC hard disc.

Current document contains a description of the SMSManager program and instructions on dealing with it.

General Information

1. Operational Functionality

The SMSManager program is used for loading SMS from text files to one of the SMS/SMS2/SMSRoll elements.

SMSManager is included in the standard ForwardT Software package and used along with other applications from the software package.

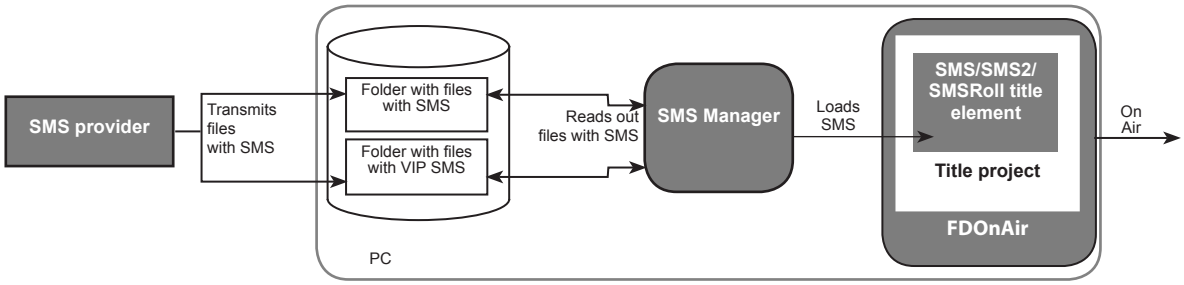
2. Feature Set

The program is designed to:

- process normal SMS;
- process VIP SMS (SMS that are of a high priority);
- output service messages;
- fill up pauses appeared on air by outputting service SMS or repeating normal SMS if there are no new messages from spactators in a queue;
- calculate and output of statistics;
- display nicknames;
- select fonts for SMS text;
- automoderate (i.e. automatic search and replacement of censored expressions by «*»; the symbol replaces one element in the expression);
- delete automatically part of SMS (from the first symbol to the specified substring inclusive).

3. Scheme of SMS Output

The picture below presents a scheme of SMS output on air using the SMSManager program.



The SMSManager program periodically scans folders with normal and VIP SMS. Periodicity is specified by user.

If folders contain files with SMS the program will read all messages, store them in internal buffer and then delete all files.

Messages are transmitted to the title element one by one.

The program transmits messages to title element only when the element is active, i.e.:

- when title project is loaded into the FDOnAir application and title object with specified element is switched «On»;
- when title project with specified title element is opened in the FDTitleDesigner program in preview mode (when adjusting of titles output).

One instance of the program loads SMS to one title element. Launch corresponding number of SMSManager instances for loading messages to several elements.

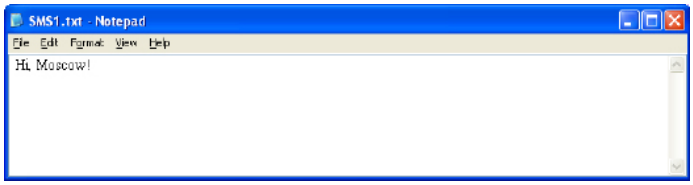
Files of SMS

Each SMS must be stored in a separate text file with the sms or txt name extension.

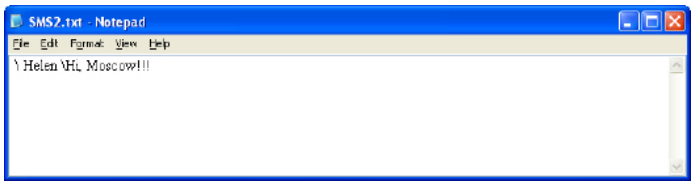
There are two types of SMS – normal and VIP. Messages of each type require a separate folder.

Text of SMS can be written in different ways:

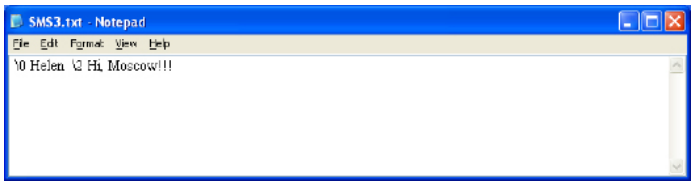
- only text of SMS;



- SMS with indicated nickname (for more information on this issue, see the «Parse Nickname» section);



- SMS with nickname and indication of design style (for more information on this issue, see the «Parse Nickname» section).



Program Launch

Start the following file ~\SMS\SMSManager.exe to launch the program, where ~ denotes a full path to the folder where ForwardT Software is installed.

Main program window with settings specified during the previous program session appears when the program is launched.

You can also launch SMSManager from the command line. Format of the command in the line is the following:

"ProgramFile" [#N][-start]

where:

- ProgramFile is a full path to the SMSManager.exe file;
- #N is program instance (optional parameter);
- -start is a key for automatic switching of the program to the mode of SMS transmitting. If the key is absent the program will be launched in the mode of configuration.

Note: Launch of the program via the command line can be implemented in ForwardT Software beginning from the 5.2.1 version. To get more information on this issue apply to technical support.

✔ **Important:** Necessarily enclose a path to the file in " ... " quotes if there are spaces in names of files and folders.

Example: "C:\Program Files\ForwardT Software\SMS\SMSManager.exe" #1 -start

Result: launch of program instance #1; the program will work in the mode of SMS transmitting.

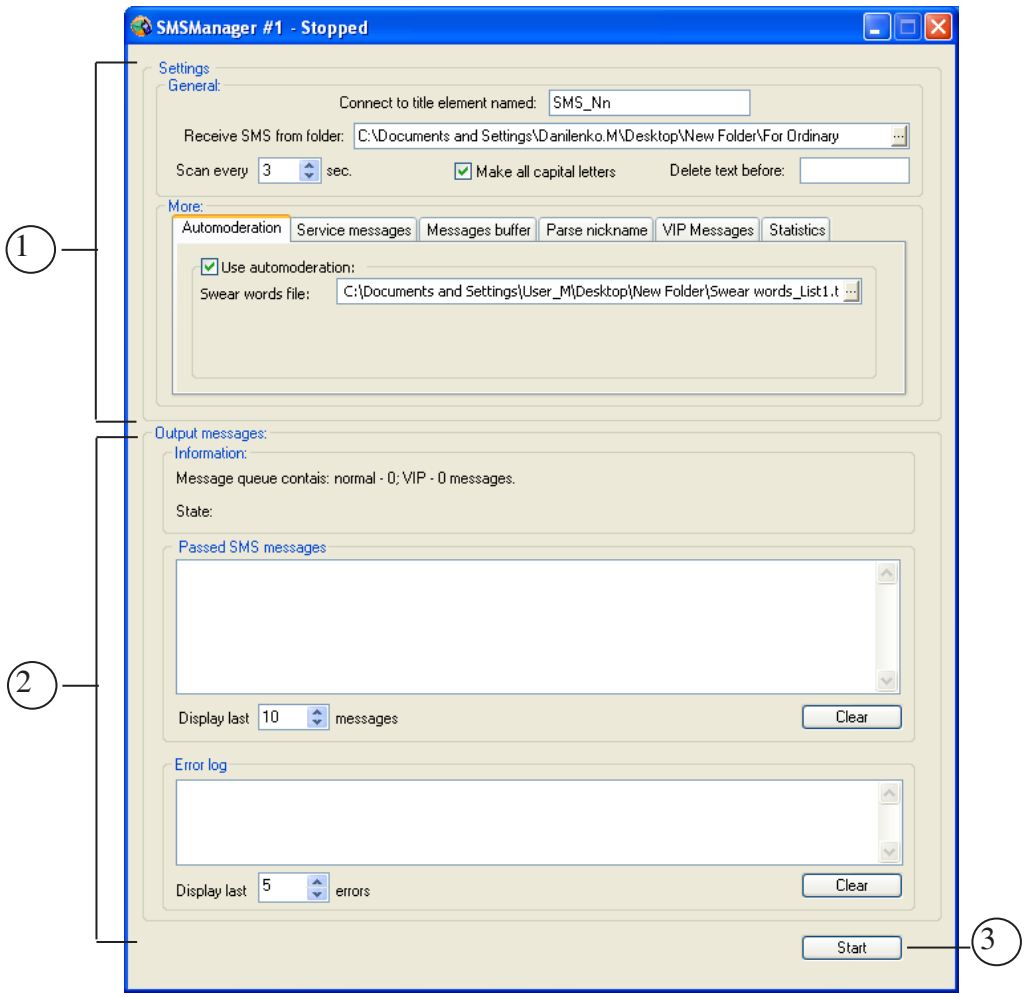
Main Program Window

1. General View

The main program window is used to configure and control SMS transmitting to title element.

The main program window has the following controls:

- Settings area (1) is used for configuring the program;
- Output messages area (2) is used to display transmitting of messages to title element;
- the Start/Stop button (3) is used to start/stop transmitting of messages to title element.

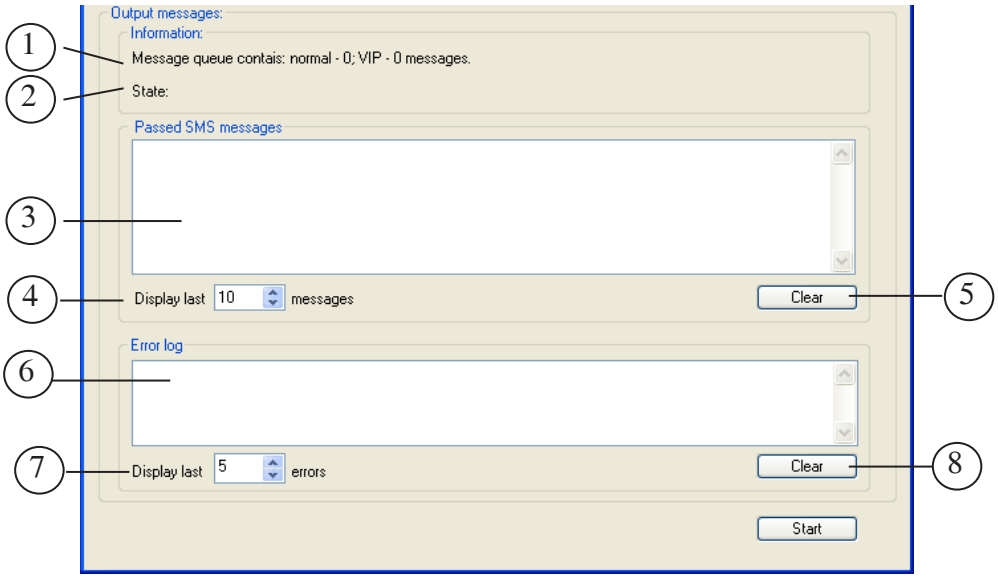


2. Settings Group

The Settings area includes controls for configuring of SMS output:

- the General group of controls is used for configuring of general settings of the program; these settings are the same for messages of different types (see the «General Settings» section);
- the More group of controls is used for configuring optional program settings: automoderation, service SMS, messages buffer, VIP SMS etc. (see corresponding sections below).

3. Output Messages Area



The Output messages group includes controls used to output SMS:

- the Information group displays information on transmitting of messages to title element:
  - string to display a number of read but not yet displayed messages (1);
  - string to display a current state of SMS transmitting (2);
- the Passed SMS messages group is used to control new SMS transmitted for being displayed. The group includes the following controls:
  - area for displaying of a list with new transmitted SMS that should be displayed (3);

- the Display last... string (4) for displaying a number of SMS transmitted to the list;
- the Clear button (5) for clearing a list with transmitted SMS;

- the Error log group for displaying error messages. The group includes the following controls (see the picture above):
  - area for displaying a list with error messages (6);
  - the Display last... string (7) for specifying a number of SMS output in the list;
  - the Clear button (8) for clearing a list with error messages.

Modes of Operation

The program has 2 modes of work:

- settings mode – in this mode you can configure session. Messages are not transmitted to title element in this mode;
- mode of messages output – the program transmits SMS to title element in this mode.

Use Start/Stop to toggle between modes.

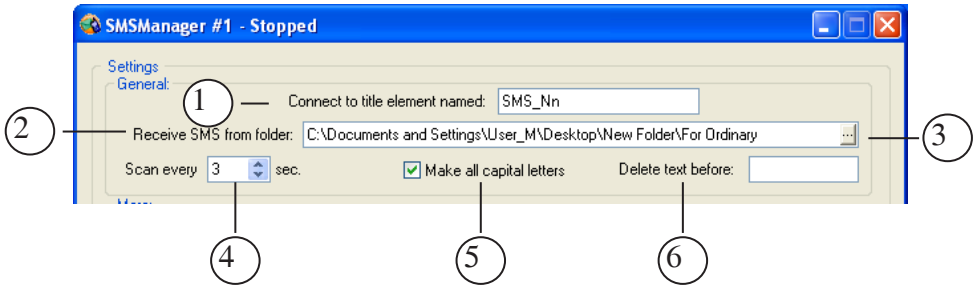
Preparing for Output of SMS

1. Prepare a file with collection of styles (*.efc) in the Forward Titling program for further designing of messages (for more information see «ForwardTitling. Graphic Editor»).
2. Arrange receiving of text files with messages in special folders located on PC:
   - files with normal SMS must be stored in a separate folder for normal SMS;
   - files with VIP SMS must be stored in a separate folder for VIP SMS.

   Text of messages meet several requirements (for more information see the «Parse Nickname» section).
3. Create title project in the FDTitleDesigner program. For this:
   - include one/several of the SMS, SMS2 or SMS-Roll title elements to the project;
   - include the Picture title element if it is necessary to output statistics (quantity of messages that are in a queue). For more information on this issue, see the «Statistics» section.
4. Create text file with service messages if they are used (for more information see the «Service messages» section).
5. Launch the SMSManager program. Configure general and optional settings of the program.
6. Test work of the program (for more information see the «Test Session» section).
7. Load title project created on step 3 to the FDOnAir application.
8. Start output of messages in the SMSManager program.
9. Create a schedule for broadcasting in the FDOnAir application. Insert if necessary commands to control title object that contains corresponding SMS/SMS2/SMSRoll element. Start the schedule for executing. You may use buttons of interactive control over title objects along with the schedule commands of switching titles with SMS on/off. The SMSManager program must be switched to the SMS output mode to output SMS on air.

General Settings

Configuration of general settings is implemented in the main program window in the General group of controls.



Workflow of configuring:

1. Specify name of a title element in the Connect to title element named field (1) that will receive SMS for output (SMS, SMS2 or SMSRoll).
2. Specify in the Receive SMS from folder field (2) a full path to the folder where normal SMS will be received.
   Use ... (3) to open the window for selecting of the folder.
3. Specify pauses between scanning of folders with SMS in the Scan every field (4).
4. Put the Make all capital letters check mark (5) if necessary to output text of messages in capitals.
5. If it is necessary to delete text at the beginning of messages enter necessary sequence of symbols in the Delete text before field (6).

Automoderation

1. General Information

Automoderation is automatic checking and censoring of swear words appeared in messages before its output on air. Symbols in such words will be replaced by the «*» mark.

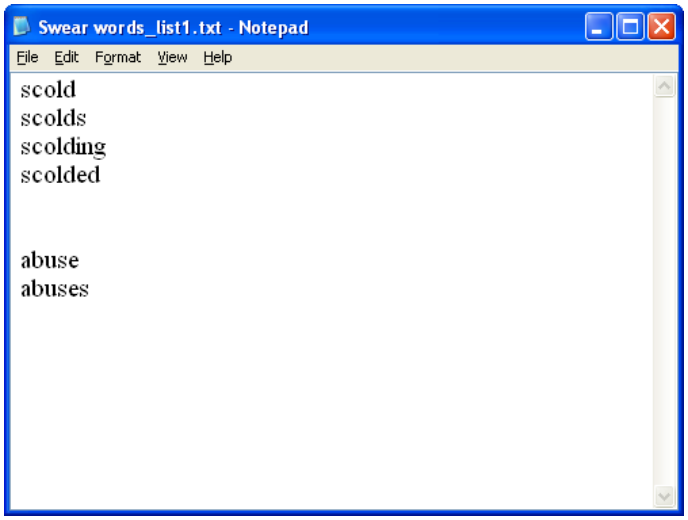
SMS automoderation will be implemented if the Use automoderation check mark on the Automoderation tab is put.

2. File With Swear Words

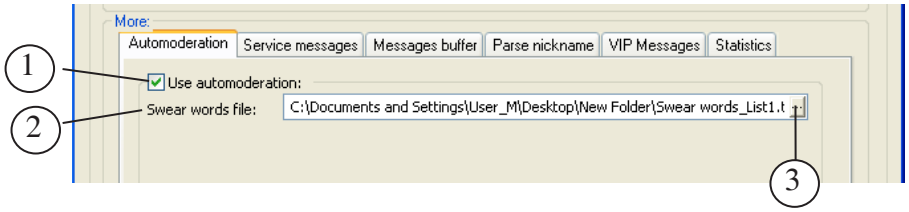
File with swear words is a text file (*.txt) with a list of censored words that can not be transmitted on air. Swear words must be recorded in the list in all possible forms, e.g. in singular/plural, with all endings etc.

Words must be either gapped or gathered in separate paragraphs.

You can create the file via any text editor that supports the TXT format.



3. Configuration



1. Pass to the Automoderation tab in the More area.
2. Put the Use automoderation check mark (1) to use further automoderation.
3. Specify a full path to the file with the list of swear words in the Swear words file field (2). Click ... (3) to open a file dialog window.

Service Messages

1. General Information

Service SMS are messages created by operator and presented as if they were received from the audience. All service messages are stored in a separate file.

Principle of service SMS output: if during user-specified period of time no new messages from spectators are received then title element will get one service SMS. Order of SMS to be output corresponds its sequence in the file with service messages.

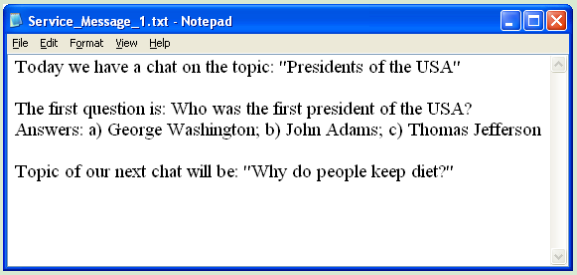
Service messages will be output if the Use service messages check mark is put.

2. File With Service SMS

File with service SMS is a text file (*.txt).

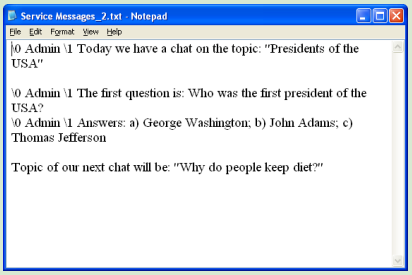
Every message must be located in a separate paragraph.

Example:

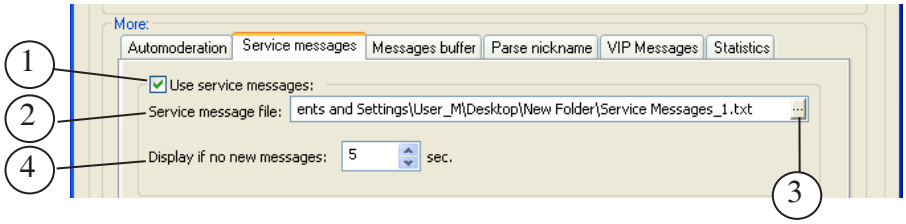


If the Use parse nickname option is activated text of service messages will be structured as it is specified in the «Parse Nickname» section.

Example:



3. Configuration



1. Pass to the Service messages tab in the More area.
2. Put the Use service messages check mark (1) to enable output of service messages using the file with service messages.
3. Specify a full path to the file with service SMS in the Service messages file field (2) by clicking ... (3).
4. Specify in the Display if no new messages field (4) available period when a folder for messages from the audience can be empty. Title element will receive one service SMS if during the specified period no new SMS from spectators is received.

Messages Buffer

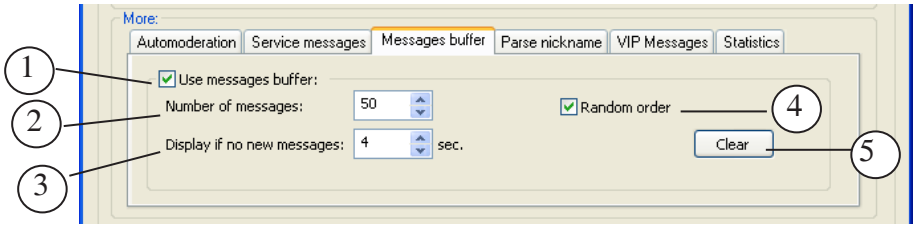
1. General Information

Messages buffer is used for storing of normal messages that were received last of all. User specifies a number of SMS that can be stored in the buffer.

Principle of messages buffer use: if during the period specified in the settings on the Messages buffer tab new messages from spectators are not received then title element receives one regular message from the buffer. Messages will be output in order of their receiving or in a random order. It depends on settings.

The buffer will be used if corresponding settings on the Messages buffer tab are configured.

2. Configuration



1. Pass to the Messages buffer tab in the More area.
2. Put the Use messages buffer check mark (1) to enable output of messages from buffer.
3. Specify a number of messages that can be stored in buffer in the Number of messages field (2). Only normal messages are stored in buffer.
4. Specify in the Display if no new messages field (4) available period when a folder for messages from the audience can be empty. Title element will receive the next SMS from buffer if during the specified period of time no SMS are received.
5. Put the Random order check mark (4) to output SMS from buffer in a random order. If the check mark is absent then messages will be output as they are in a queue.
6. Click Clear (5) to clear buffer.

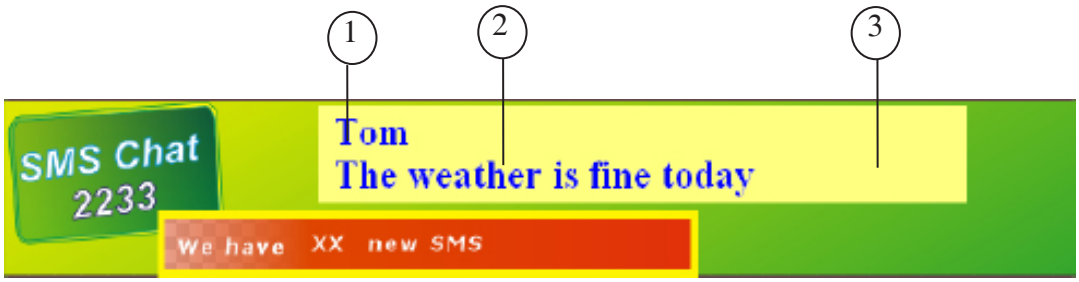
Parse Nickname

1. General Information

The program provides a possibility of organizing output of nicknames. Design of nicknames can differ from design of SMS text.

The picture below presents an example of SMS output using the Parse Nickname option:

- (1) is nickname (located in a separate from SMS string when the Display nickname in a separate line mode is on);
- (2) is text of SMS;
- (3) is background.



Activation and configuration of the option is implemented on the Parse Nickname tab.

Text in files must be structured in one of the described below ways to use the Use parse nickname option correctly:

- \␣Nickname␣\␣SMS Text – in this case nickname and SMS text are designed according to the styles specified on the Parse nickname tab as default styles;
- \First style␣Nickname␣\Second style␣SMS text – in this case nickname and SMS text are designed according to specified styles (First style is for nicknames; Second style is for SMS text).

Gaps (for more clearness marked with «␣») and reverse slashes are obligatory. First style, Second style – number corresponding to index of the style (beginning from 0) or name of the style in the file with collection of styles (*.efc). File with collection of styles is specified in settings of a title element.

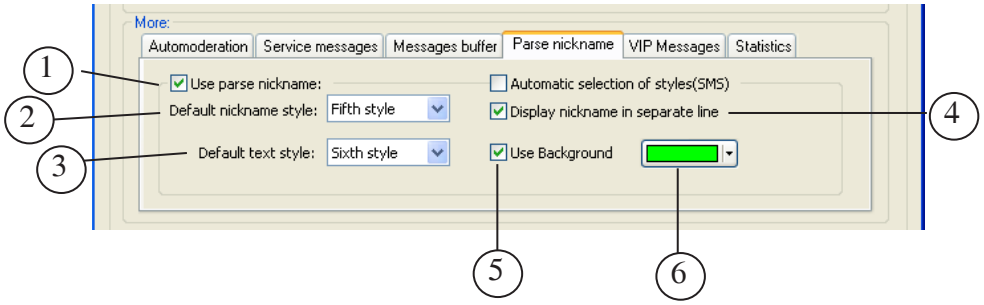
Example: \0 Tom \1 The weather is fine today

Important: Do not confuse «\» with «/»!

If the Use parse nickname option is activated but SMS text is not structured in any of the given ways then the title element will receive the whole text from the file with SMS. The text will be designed according to the style specified in the settings as default text style.

If the Parse nickname option is not activated and SMS text is structured in any of the given ways then the tilte element will receive the whole text from the file with SMS including «\» and style tags.

2. Configuration



1. Pass to the Parse Nickname tab in the More area.
2. Put the Use parse nickname check mark (1) to activate this option. The option is used for normal, VIP and service messages.
3. Specify default nickname style in the Default nickname style drop-down list (2) according to its index in the file with collection of styles beginning from 1. This style will be applied if another one is not specified for nickname design.
4. Specify default text style in the Default text style list (3) according to its index in the file with collection of styles beginning from 1.
5. Put the Display nickname in separate line check mark (4) to output nickname in a separate from SMS text string.
6. Put the Use Background check mark (5) to use a background when SMS are output. When the check mark is put the palette (6) for selecting of background colour will be available. The whole SMS text (nickname and SMS text) will be designed by the background.

The Use parse nickname (1) and Display nickname in separate line (4) options are used for normal, VIP and service messages.

The Default nickname style (2), Default text style (3) and Use Background (5) options are used for normal and service messages.

VIP Messages

1. General Information

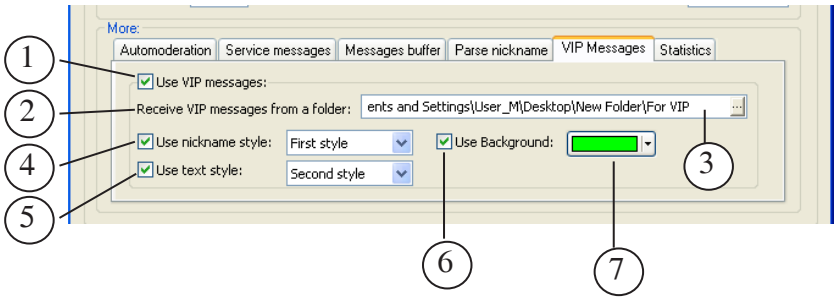
VIP SMS are messages that are of a more high priority comparing it with normal.

VIP messages should be stored in a separate folder.

At receiving of VIP SMS the program stops for some time transmitting of normal messages to title element and transmits successively all received VIP SMS. When all VIP messages are sent the program continues transmitting of normal SMS.

The program deals with VIP SMS if required settings are specified on the VIP Messages tab.

2. Configuration



1. Pass to the VIP Messages tab in the More area.
2. Put the Use VIP messages check mark (1) to activate this option.
3. Specify a full path to the folder with VIP messages in the Receive VIP messages from a folder field (2) using the ... button (3).
4. If the Use parse nickname option is activated put the Use Nickname style check mark (4). Then select default nickname style for VIP messages. The style should be specified according to its index in the file with collection of styles beginning from 1.
5. Put the Use text style check mark (5) and select default style of the text. The style should be specified according to its index in the file with collection of styles beginning from 1.
6. Put the Use background check mark (6) to use background at output of VIP SMS. When the check mark is put the palette (6) for selecting the background colour will be available.

Statistics

1. General Information

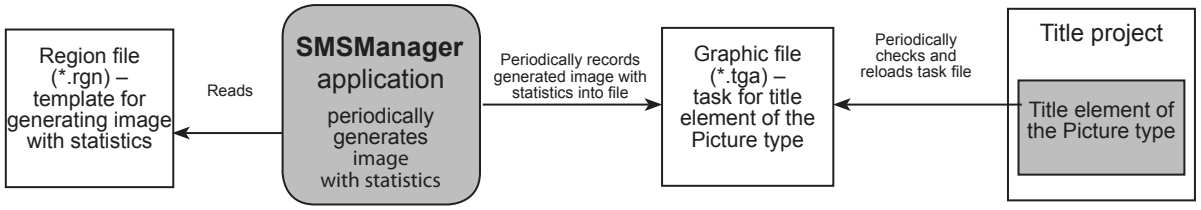
«Statistics» is a number of received but not yet output normal messages.

The program outputs statistics in the form of a picture into a graphic file.

To organize statistics output you should implement additional steps (see description below) and configure settings on the Statistics tab.

2. Scheme of Output

A scheme of statistics output is presented on the picture below.



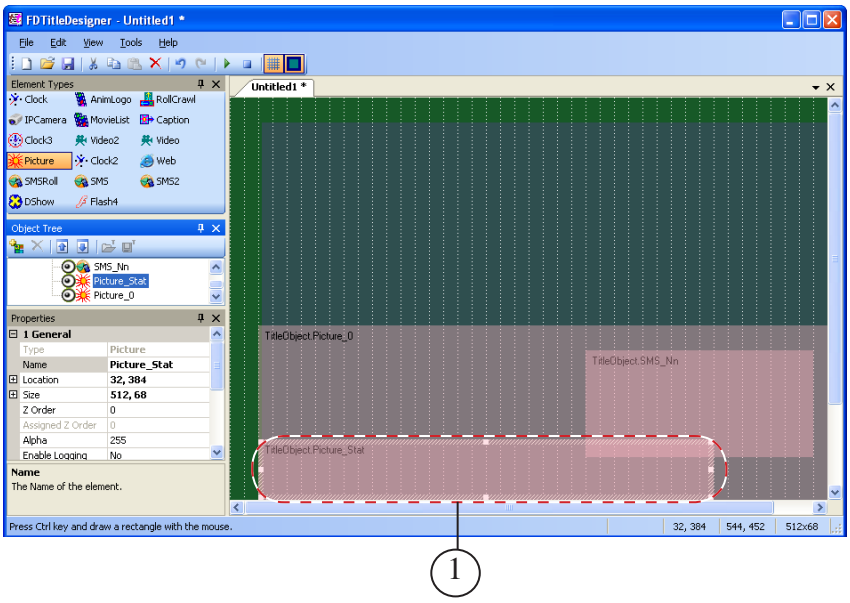
The SMSManager program once in a second generates and records image with chat statistics into a graphic file.

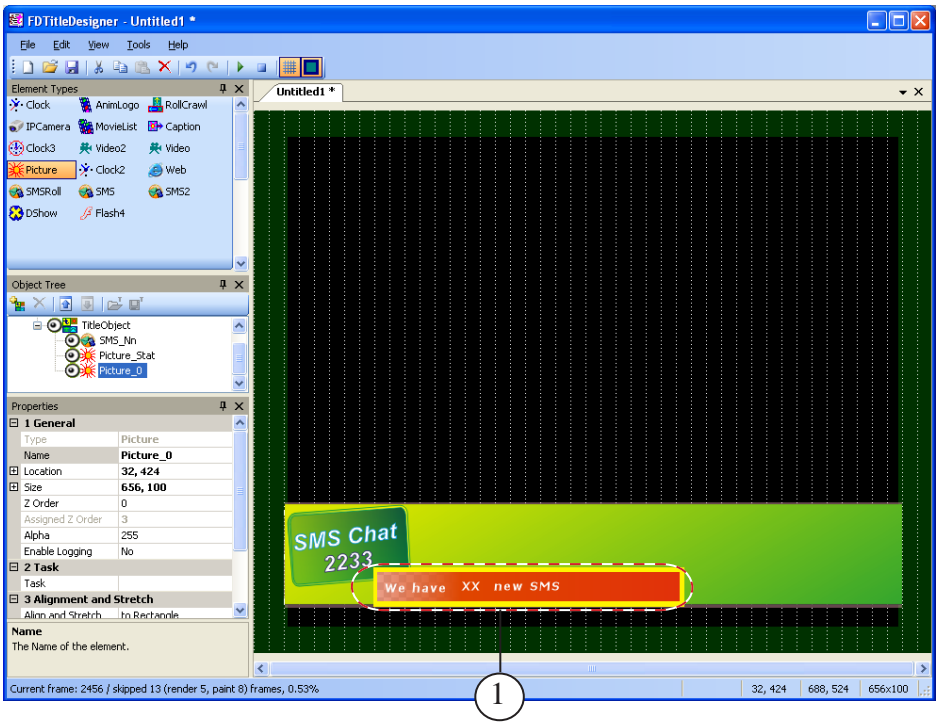
Image is generated on the base of prepared template.

Output of statistics into titles is implemented via title element of the Picture type. Task for this element is a graphic file with statistics.

✔ **Important:** The SMSManager program outputs statistics into a graphic file. The program does not output error messages if no title element is activated to output generated image.

The pictures below present a fragment of a title project opened with the FDTitleDesigner program in editing and preview modes. Title element of the Picture type with the Picture_Stat name (1) is used to output the image with statistics.





3. Preliminary Steps

First complete the following steps before configuring statistics output in the SMSManager program:

1. In the Forward Titling graphic editor:
   - create and save to region file (*.rgn) the image used as a template of the image with statistics;
   - save created image to graphic file (*.tga). The SMSManager program will output generated image with statistics in this file.
2. Open a title project used for output of SMS in the FDTitleDesigner program. Add title element of the Picture type to the project. Specify *.tga file (prepared on step 1) as the task for title element.

4. Region File

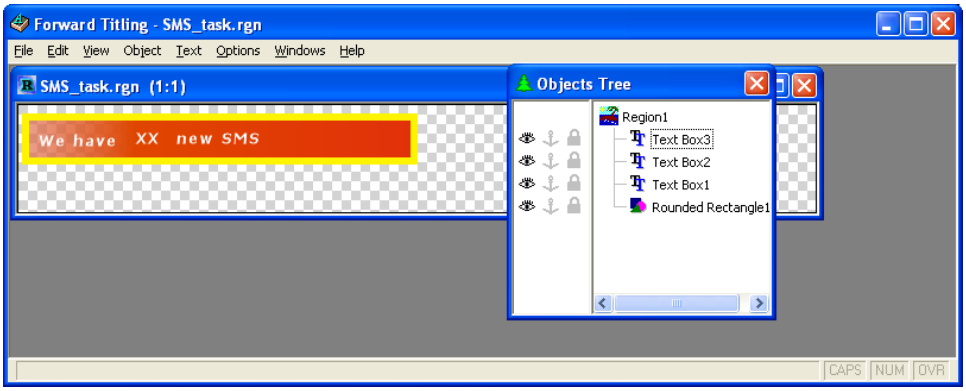
Region file is a graphic file with the rgn name extension.

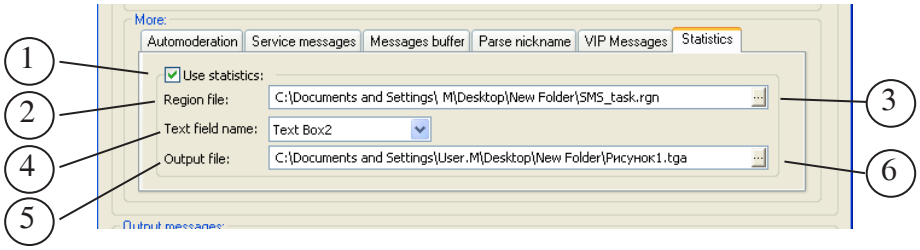
File of the region is created by user in the Forward Titling program. This program is included into the ForwardT Software set. More information on Forward Titling you may find in the «ForwardTitling. Graphic Editor» document.

Image in the region file is named as a region. The region is a full-colour and multilayer image with alpha channel.

Region for output of statistics must necessarily include the Text box object. When the image is generated statistics will be inserted to this object. Text in generated image will be designed according to the specified settings.

The picture below presents example of a region used for output of statistics.

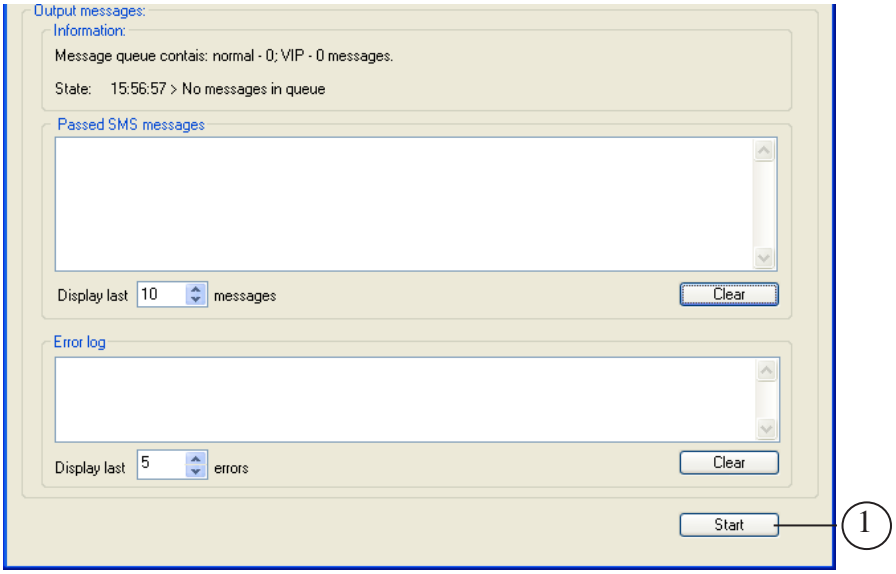




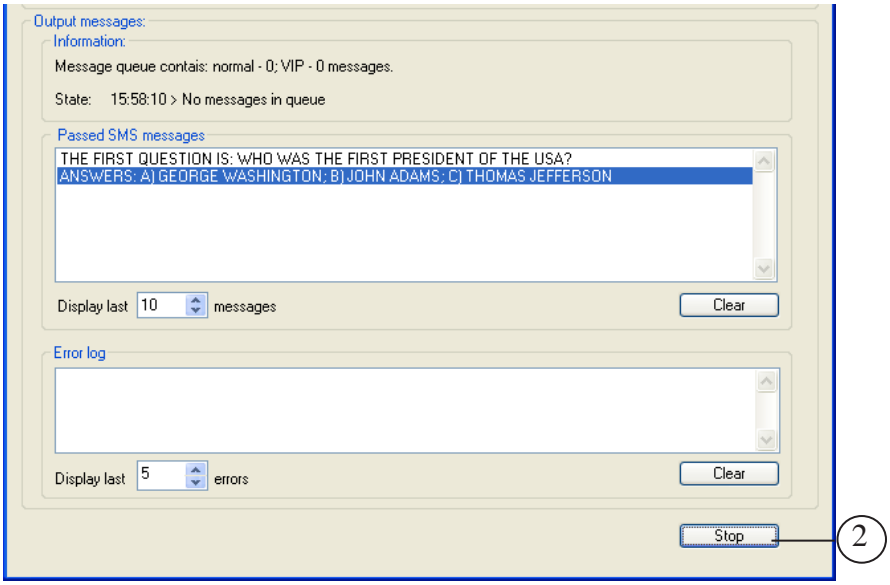
1. Pass to the Statistics tab in the More area.
2. Put the Use statistics check mark (1) to activate this option.
3. Specify a full path to the file of a region in the Region file field (2) via the ... button (3). File of the region is a template for generating of image with statistics.
4. Select name of a text object (in the region) in the Text field name list (4). The object is used to output of the information on statistics (Text Box2 is in our example, see the picture above).
5. Specify a full path to the file to output generated image with statistics in the Output file field (5) via the ... button (6).

Control Over Messages Output

Click the Start button (1) in the main program window to start transmitting of messages to title element.



SMS transmitting to element will be displayed in the main program window in the Output messages section when the program is switched into the mode of SMS output.



Click Stop to stop transmitting of SMS and switch the program back to the settings mode.

Test Session

Test session is implemented when steps 1–5 specified in the «Preparing for Output of SMS» section are implemented.

Complete the following actions that are obligatory for test session:

1. Prepare several text files that imitate files with SMS and save them to the folder specified as the source of SMS.

Tip: After SMS are transmitted the SMSManager program will delete these files. That is why we recommend you to save copies of files in another folder.

2. Switch title element (used for displaying of SMS) to active mode in order to transmit messages in one of the following ways:
   - using the FDOnAir application in the mode «without board»:
     - load title project with specified title element to the FDOnAir application;
     - turn title object with necessary title element on via commands of schedule or buttons of interactive control;

     In this case transmitted on air data will be shown in the window of the SLTitlePreview program. For more details on this issue, see the «FDOnAir. Additional Sections» document (the «Viewing Data on the Computer Monitor Without Using an FD300 Board. The SLTitlePreview program» section);
   - using the FDTitleDesigner program: open title project with the specified title element. Then switch FDTitleDesigner in view mode.
     In this case SMS output will be viewed via the FDTitleDesigner program.
3. Switch the SMSManager program to the mode of SMS output.

Useful Links

ForwardT Software set: description, download, documentation, solutions
http://www.softlab-nsk.com/forward/index.html

Support
e-mail: forward@sl.iae.nsk.su
forward@softlab-nsk.com

Forum
http://www.softlab-nsk.com/forum (currently available in Russian only)

Documentation for more information:
ForwardTitling. Graphic Editor
FDTitle Designer. Title Project Editor
FDOnAir. Additional Sections

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