What is FTP Droplet?

Some time ago we created a website for a company that had a *lot* of videos. These videos were pretty critical in explaining to their customers exactly what it is they did and so they needed them to be on their website in a format that anyone could download and use.

Now, uploading files is dead easy if, like us, you use something like TinyMCE as your editor. Our content management system does and so we tried uploading the files using the standard file manager. You've probably already discovered – it doesn't work for large files.

We had a number of choices and the one we've always favoured is to use a file upload service such as YouTube or Vimeo. However, our customer didn't want this; they wanted the files to go on their own server. It's their server, I wasn't bothered about the file size and bandwidth issues so I though "to hell with it, I'll write something!" And I did.

Installation

Just unzip the file and you'll have everything you need. There are two main applications the 'configurator' and 'FTPDroplet' itself and there are two external '.dll' files. When you send FTPDroplet to your customer, you'll need to make sure there are these two files in there too.
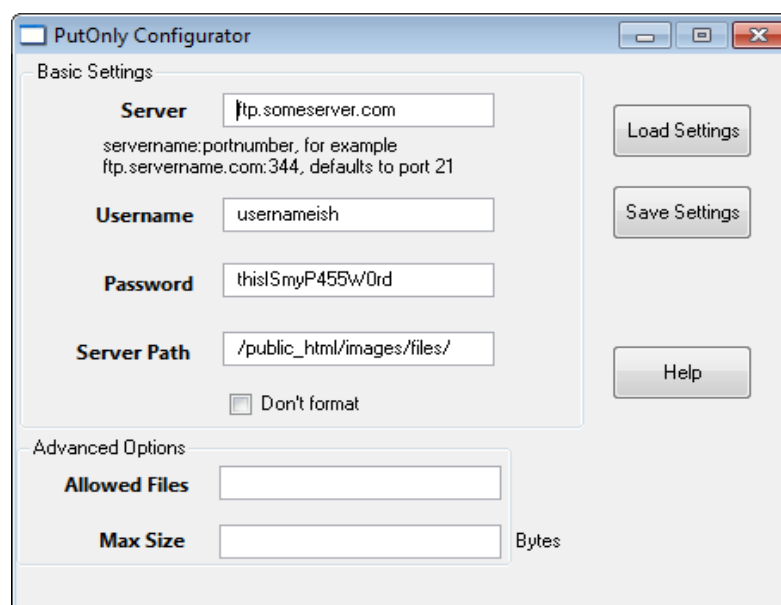
FTP Droplet

I created a very simple application that allows my customers to upload a file to their server without them having to know or understand *anything* about FTP. I create the configuration file for them, it's encrypted (so they can't discover the username and password details) and they can just go ahead and upload a file. Dead easy.

Here's how it works

There are two programmes in the package, one is 'FTP Droplet' itself and this is what goes to your customer, the other is the 'configurator' which is where you enter the FTP details. The steps to getting all this working are incredibly simple, here's how:

Load up the Configurator:

All the headings are pretty self-explanatory but a few things to remember:

First off, all this stuff is encrypted when it gets to the settings file, but, for full security I'd make sure the username and password you set up only have access to the one directory.

Secondly, the 'server path' will automatically check for a leading and trailing slash (/). If for some

strange reason you *don't* want it to do this, click the 'Don't format' check box. I doubt that anybody would want to do this, but you never know.

Advanced Options

These don't work as of this version of the software; it's for a version coming out soon which will give you a little bit more control over the files that can be uploaded. Also, the new version will have the ability of having *your* branding on it so you don't have to give your customers our advertising!

Saving the file

When you click on 'save file' a 'settings.ini' file is created in the same folder as the configurator. This is what you send to your customer along with the FTP Droplet application.

FTP Droplet

The FTP Droplet application must have the libraries and the settings.ini file in the same directory as the application to work. I've made it like this so you can potentially run the system from a USB drive if it takes your fancy.

OK, with the settings file in place, the user simply does two things:

This brings up a standard file browser. The user chooses the file they want to upload. Assuming the settings file is there, it will work just fine.

Then:

Bish bosh. File is uploaded (assuming your settings are correct!) and the user is a happy bunny.

Notes

As I said above, we use this with TinyMCE. When our user uploads the file, we have it put into the 'images' directory of the server. When they then go to insert the video/file or image, it will simply be sitting there waiting for them. It's dead easy.

Duplicate file names

The system currently **DOES NOT** check for duplicate file names. We prefer this as it means the user can't fill the directory with lots of files simply because they keep pressing the 'upload' button. We may add a configuration option in a later version.

Support

As this is a free bit of software, there is NO OFFICIAL SUPPORT! However, we have created a forum over here : http://ftpdroplet.freeforums.org. Pop by and ask questions. Dare ya.

Feel free to use the forum for bugs, enhancement requests and anything else; we'll also announce any changes and upgrades in there.