Creating themes for Symbian and Series 40

This article exaplains how to create a theme for Symbian and Series 40 using Carbide.ui

This article needs to be updated: If you found this article useful, please fix the problems below then delete the {{ArticleNeedsUpdate}} template from the article to remove this warning.

Reasons: hamishwillee
(22 Nov 2012)
This is accurate only to S60 5th Edition and (unknown version) of Series 40. In any case, since this version carbide.ui has dropped support for Symbian. I recommend first there is a check of the library to confirm whether this article is needed. If it is then it should be split into Symbian C++ and Series 40 variants which reflect the latest versions of the toolchains in each case. If it is not needed, then it can be replaced by an explanation of what Carbide.ui version is appropriate for each platform version and a link to the library documentation.

What is a theme?

The theme is basically a combination of pictures and colors that make our mobile display screen how it looks like. You can apply themes and can change background image, text color, battery strength, signal strength, application icons and everything which you can see on your mobile phone screen. Theme does not change functionality of any application in the mobile. There are lots of themes available on internet to suit your mobile. However if you feel (you must) to have your own theme with your favorite colors and images then Nokia has come with the rescue for you. You can create your own theme and distribute it among your friends. This way you will be different mobile user than others.

What you need?

You need to first identify your phone whether it is S60 3rd edition, 4th edition or 5th edition. Based on your target phone for which you are creating theme you can download the appropriate theme edition software or its plug-in. Please visit the link http://www.developer.nokia.com/Resources/Tools_and_downloads/Other/Carbide.ui/ to download the edition. You will find two different software to download.

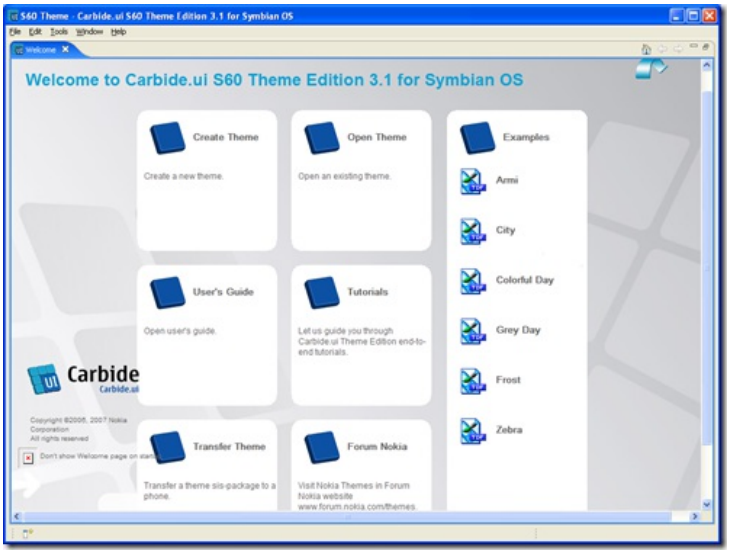
1. Carbide.UI Theme edition: for S60 and symbian devices.
2. Carbide.UI Series 40 theme edition: For S40 devices.

Additionally you can download theme edition plug-ins for both of the above software. Install the software and if require add plug-in to the theme edition software. Plug-ins and it'qs installation guide can be download from here ui Theme Edition 3 0 Plugins.html for S60 devices and ui Series 40 Theme Edition Plug ins.html for S40 device. The software is designed using eclipse. Eclipse is a multi-language software development environment comprising an integrated development environment (IDE) and an extensible plug-in system. It is written mostly in Java and can be used to develop applications in Java and, by means of various plug-ins, other programming languages including Ada, C, C++, COBOL, Perl, PHP, Python, Ruby (including Ruby on Rails framework), Scala, Clojure, and Scheme (Eclipsed definition sourced from wikipedia).

Designing Theme for your mobile

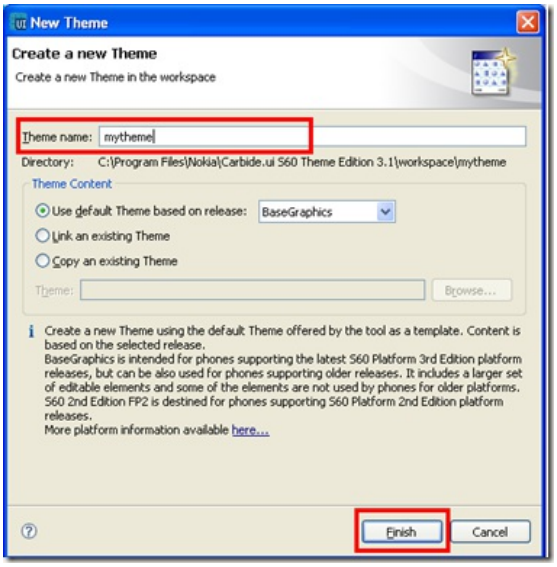
Once you have installed the Carbide UI theme edition in the computer, you can start designing the theme for your target mobile devices. Open Carbide UI theme edition from its installed location. It will ask for workspace to create/select first. Workspace is a folder where all your projects will be stored. Select the workspace and you will see the first welcome screen as shown in following figure followed by the tip of the day.

--> You may put any directory for the workspace. After that it will open the Carbide welcome screen where you can choose tasks like "Create Theme" or open an existing theme:

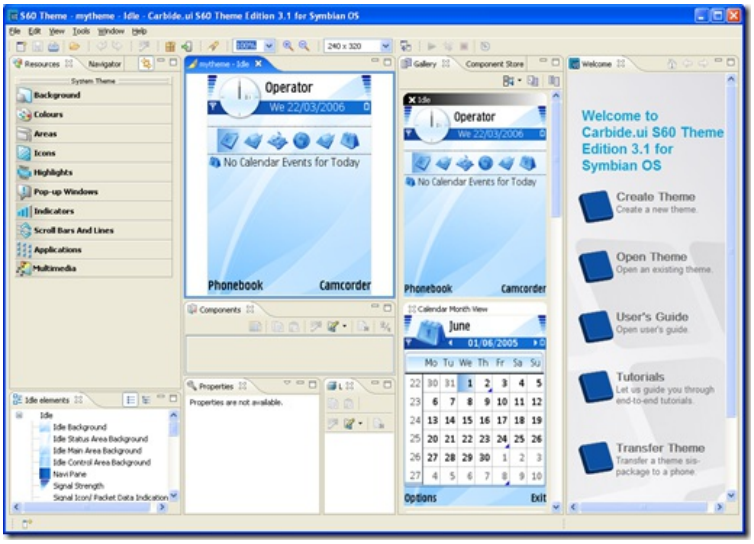


--> Choose "Create Theme", it will open a dialog window that will ask for the name of the theme:

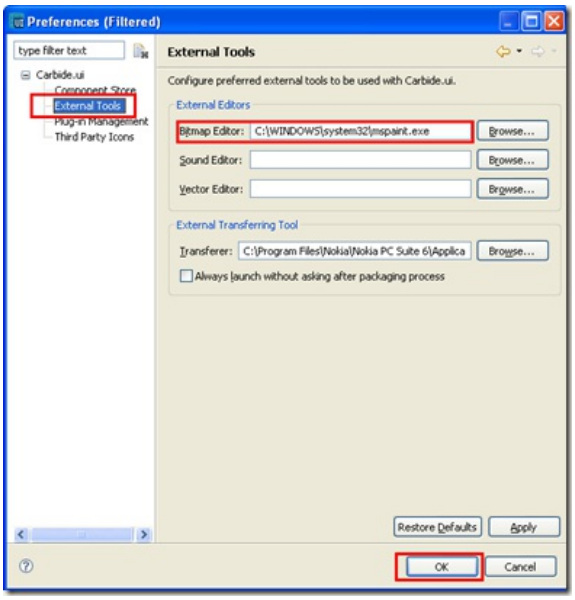
(C) Copyright Nokia 2013. All rights reserved.



--> After clicking “Finish” the theme editor will appear:



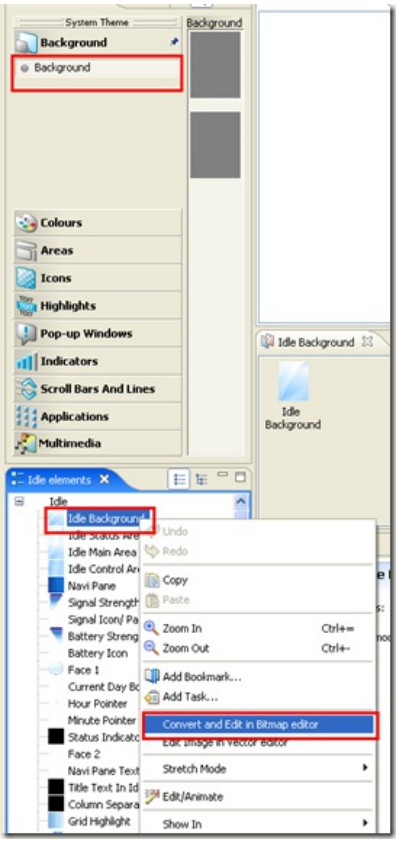
--> To start editing background pictures, you will need to set the bitmap editor on the Preferences panel :



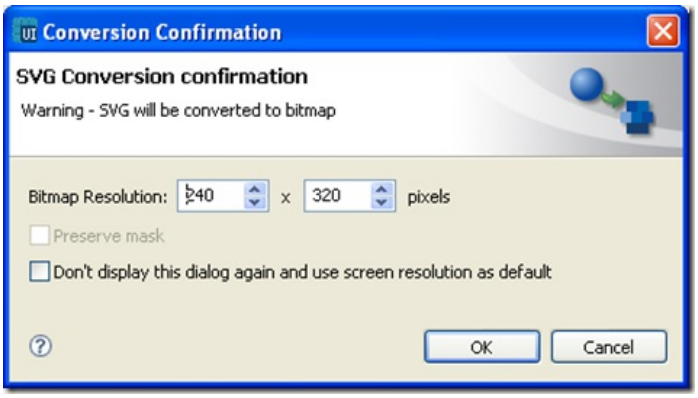
Note that the Bitmap Editor could be any photo editing software.If you have Adobe Photoshop then you can put it on the path of the Bitmap editor instead of mspaint.You can always change this to any exe file you want.

--> To start editing the background picture click Background > Idle Background > Convert and Edit in Bitmap Editor:

(C) Copyright Nokia 2013. All rights reserved.



--> It will ask for the size of the picture/bitmap file:



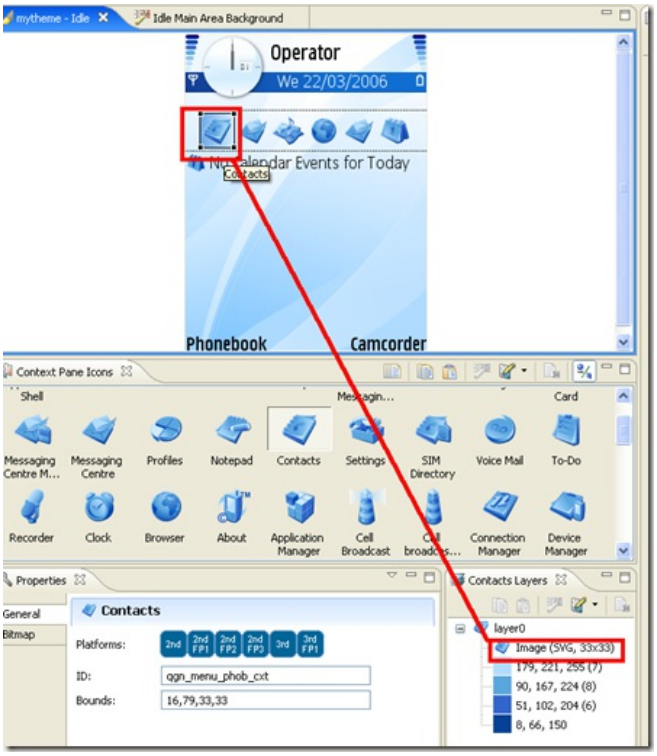
--> Change the dimensions of the picture as needed. This is set to default (240X320) for Nokia S60 phones. Click OK to continue editing the bitmap/picture file.

MSPaint (or any bitmap editor you set) should open and let you edit as an ordinary picture file:

(C) Copyright Nokia 2013. All rights reserved.

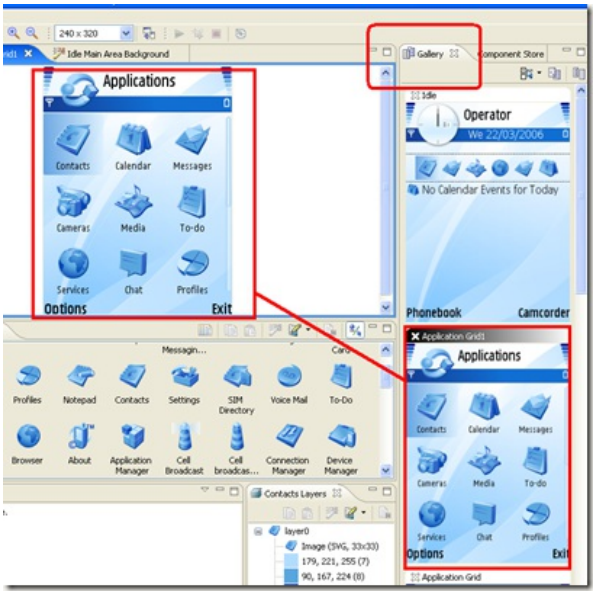
--> From this point, it is all photo editing creativity and making the background picture that you want to appear on your phone. Save the file to have it updated on the theme editor.

--> The beauty of the theme editor is that every item on the theme is editable using the same method. For example, editing the contacts icon is done by clicking the contacts icon and exporting the icon to a bitmap editor:



--> To edit each individual interface (i.e. Applications menu, Idle menu) use the Gallery Tab and click on the menu you want to edit:

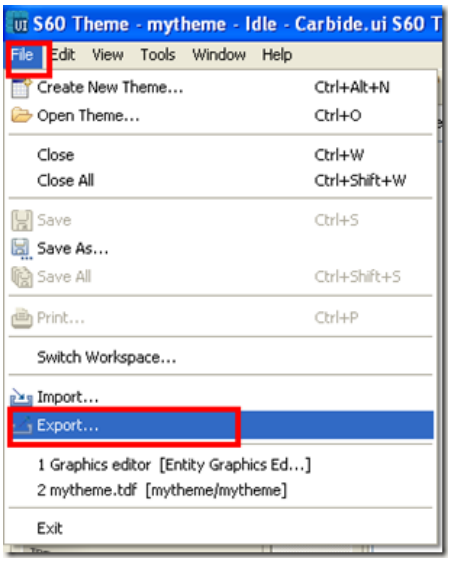
(C) Copyright Nokia 2013. All rights reserved.



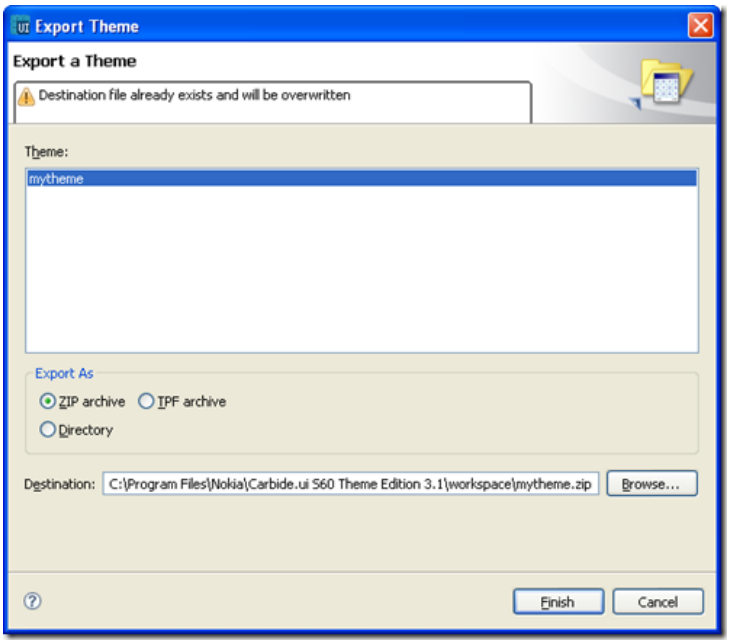
On the above example, I clicked the Applications Grid 1 to edit the Applications menu of type 1.

(**Note: There is a type 2 Applications menu on Nokia S60**)

--> After editing the colors and background pictures, export the file so you can install it on your phone:



--> It will ask for the location where you want your theme file be saved:



(C) Copyright Nokia 2013. All rights reserved.

To put the theme file on your phone just send the theme to your phone via Bluetooth. Open the file in your phone's inbox and just install it from the inbox application. If you don't have Bluetooth, you can put the file in your memory card using a memory card reader.

Best of Luck!....

Troubleshooting

Note: This section added by moderator in response to comment by user - 22 November 2012

As general approach for troubleshooting theme issues is:

1. Start with a clean installation of the SDK
2. Test the sample theme project supplied with the SDK. If you are able to compile, install and run the sample the toolchain is working properly.
3. Start with the sample theme in the SDK and bitwise add new functionality, testing at regular points. If there are issues with your theme files you can then identify these against a working baseline.
4. While editing try to avoid changing the type of images from SVG (or whatever they are in the example)
5. After editing go to **tools =>create new package**, and then install on the device.

(C) Copyright Nokia 2013. All rights reserved.

(C) Copyright Nokia 2013. All rights reserved.