

# Haumohio

## Haumohio RSS Developer's Pack

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# **Haumohio RSS Developer's Pack**

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# Table of Contents

<b>Part I Introducing the RSS Developer's Pack</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Part II Components in this pack</b>	<b>2</b>
1 The RSS Menu Item Component .....	2
Introducing the RSS Menu Item .....	2
Configuring RSS MenuItem .....	3
2 The RSS StatusBarPanel Component .....	5
The RSS StatusBar Panel .....	5
Configuring RSS StatusBar Panel .....	5
<b>Part III Installing the RSS Developer's Pack</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Part IV Licensing components</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Index</b>	<b>9</b>

# 1 Introducing the RSS Developer's Pack



The RSS Developer's pack contains controls and components for Microsoft .Net developers that easily add RSS News Feed capability to products under development. The components in this pack are designed to help you as a developer to quickly and easily harness the power of RSS to integrate your company's news and announcements into your products, without having to implement all the nitty-gritty parts of syndicated news feeds.

## Take the hassle out of remote news feeds

The Haumohio RSS components quickly look up a news feed formatted XML file on your website, which contains your current news. Changing the XML file, changes what *all* your users see in one easy stroke. The feed could contain product update announcements, answers to the latest burning FAQ, event announcements, or anything that you desire to communicate to the users of your software. [Haumohio FeedWrite](#) could be used to create the XML file in the correct shape, and with all of the required fields.

The components in this pack are able to read from a number of news feed standards, including:

- RSS v0.9
- RSS 1.x
- RSS 2.x
- ATOM 0.9

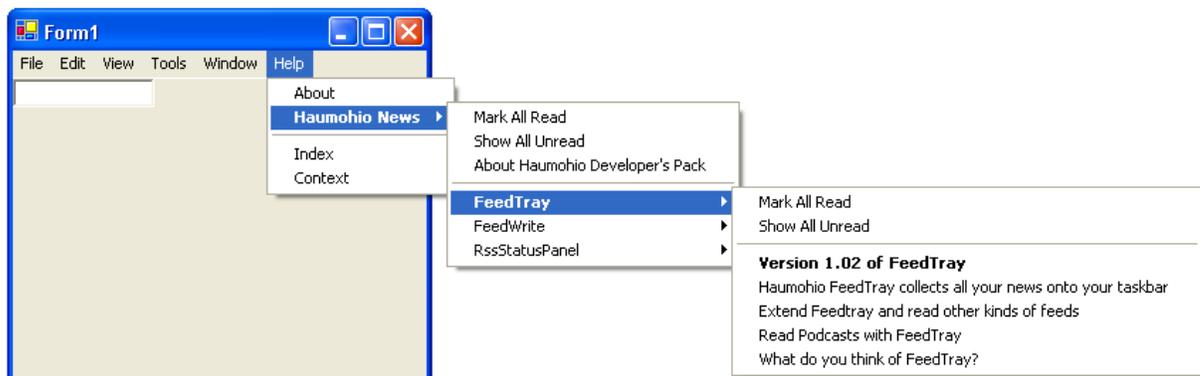
The components in this pack integrate into Microsoft's Visual Studio; simply add them to a form, set the parameters of the news feed, and your done!

## 2 Components in this pack

### 2.1 The RSS Menu Item Component

#### 2.1.1 Introducing the RSS Menu Item

The RSS Menu Item appears to a user to be just like any other menu item, but *SURPRISE!* its sub-contents change daily. How do they do that?



The RSS Menu Item can be added to any menu just like any other standard Windows MenuItem object. When the command is given it quietly goes off to read its designated news feed (in a separate thread - of course) and populates its sub-menu items with the up-to-the-second news articles. Any number of RSS MenuItem's can exist in a project, form, or even menu, without clashing.

The control loads its data from the configured internet location in a separate thread so as not to interrupt the flow of the interface. If an internet connection or the news feed is not available, then it will add a sub-menu indicating as such and stop using up resources in fruitless searching. This means the user is not disadvantaged in using your product if not connected.

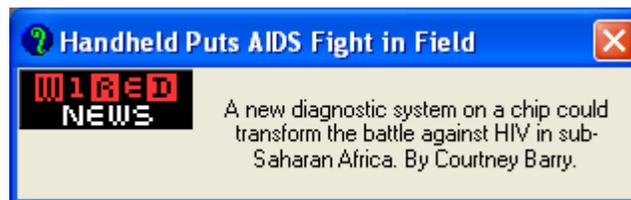
### Keeping track of what has been read or not

It even keeps track of which articles the current user has read, and highlights the unread articles by rendering them as in bold font. This means the user only has to open the containing menu (e.g. the Help menu in this case), and see if the news feed is rendered in bold, in order to see if there is anything new. If the articles are categorised, the unread highlighting is propagated up to the containing category. So, in the example above both "Haumohio News" and "FeedTray" are highlighted, because the article entitled "Version 1.02 of FeedTray" has not yet been read by the current user.

This is implemented by saving the unread article titles in the registry under the current user section. If, on the next read of the news feed, an article has been removed from the feed, then it is removed from the list in the registry as well. Therefore, there will only be a maximum of the number of entries in the registry, as there is articles in the current news feed.

### What happens when an article item is clicked

When an article in the news feed is clicked by the user a short description of what the article is about (i.e. the content of the news feed file) is shown as below:



Clicking on the text or the logo of the article description closes this small window and launches the default web browser, opening the link nominated within the article. This could be a full article in an online magazine, a video / music file, or an installer for your next upgrade - basically anything you can point a URL at. [Haumohio FeedWrite](#) could be used to create the news feed file in the correct shape, and with all of the required fields.

## 2.1.2 Configuring RSS MenuItem

Configuring the RSS MenuItem is as simple as telling it where the news feed is, your licence details, and where the menu should be displayed.

This is done through a few properties on the component, that may be entered using the visual designer in Microsoft Visual Studio, or just as easily with a text editor. These properties are:

<b>RSSFeedUrl</b>	The URL of the news feed file itself; usually on your company's website
<b>CompanyRegistrationEmail</b>	Your registered email, used as a key to authorise the URL as registered. See <a href="#">Licensing components</a> .
<b>Menu</b>	The Menu (or more specifically MenuItem) that the RSS MenuItem should be a child of. The Menu can be context or main.
<b>ItemIndex</b>	The index to insert the RSS Menu Item at (zero-based)
<b>LineBefore &amp; LineAfter</b>	A flag used to indicate whether a line-separator should be inserted before and/or after the RSS MenuItem.
<b>Categorise</b>	A flag indicating whether the feed should be split into sub-menus based on each articles "category" attribute. Note that this is an optional RSS attribute and therefore may not exist on the chosen news feed

## Activating the component

The actual loading of the data from the news feed is entirely under your control. There is a single command given to the control - namely **Fetch()**. This command can be given at any time, or even multiple times, during the lifetime of the application. For instance, Fetch() can be called within the *Load* event of the containing form so that the components are ready when the form is shown, or delayed until later if the *Load* event is a "busy" time.

## Configuring without an IDE

The RSS MenuItem can be configured using the following code snippet:

```
[C#]
using Haumohio.RSS;

    private RssMenuItemControl rssMIControl = new RssMenuItemControl();
...
    rssMIControl.Categorise = true;
    rssMIControl.CompanyRegistrationEmail = "sales@haumohio.com";
    rssMIControl.ItemIndex = 1;
    rssMIControl.LineBefore = false;
    rssMIControl.LineAfter = true;
    rssMIControl.Menu = HelpMenu;
    rssMIControl.RssFeedUrl = "http://www.haumohio.com/haumohio.xml";
...
    rssMIControl.Fetch();

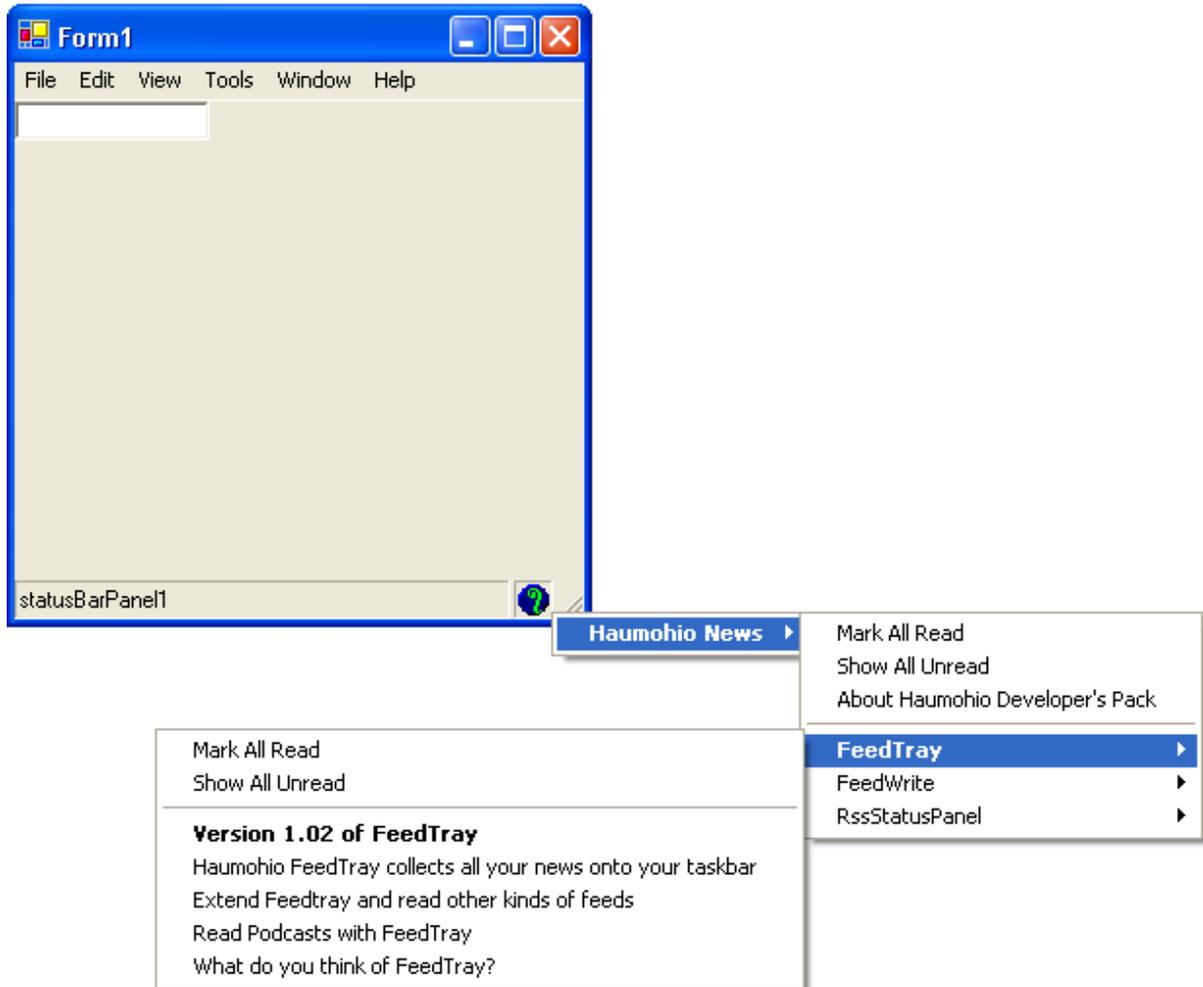
[VB]
Imports Haumohio.RSS

    Dim rssMIControl AS RssMenuItemControl = New RssMenuItemControl()
...
    rssMIControl.CompanyRegistrationEmail = "sales@haumohio.com"
    rssMIControl.ItemIndex = 1
    rssMIControl.LineBefore = false
    rssMIControl.LineAfter = true
    rssMIControl.Menu = HelpMenu
    rssMIControl.RssFeedUrl = "http://www.haumohio.com/haumohio.xml"
...
    rssMIControl .Fetch()
```

## 2.2 The RSS StatusBarPanel Component

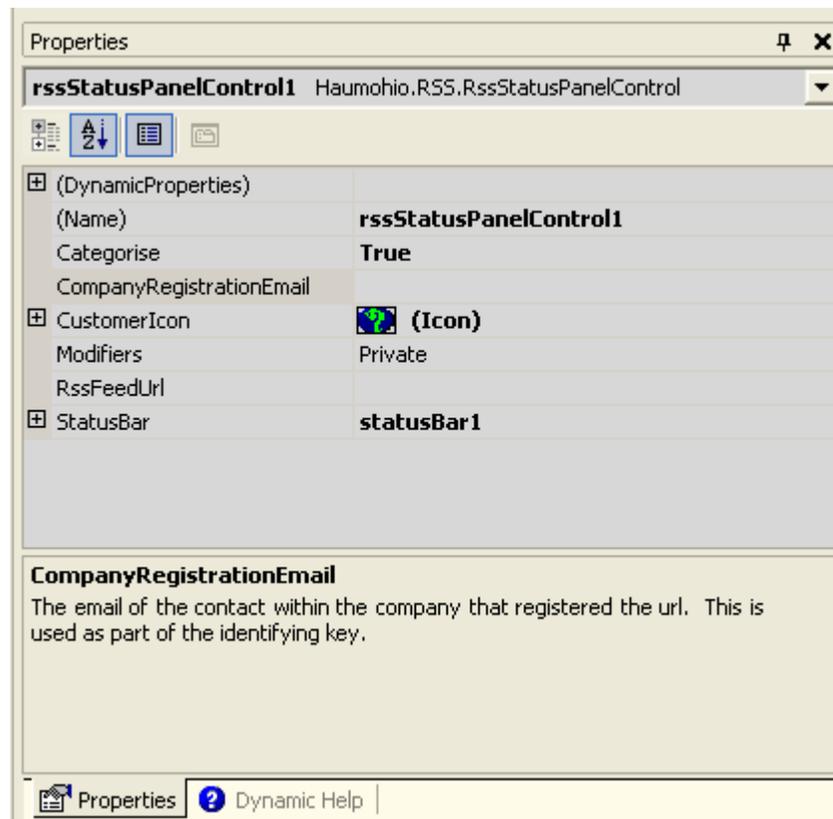
### 2.2.1 The RSS StatusBar Panel

The RSS StatusBar Panel looks like an unobtrusive icon in the status bar normally found at the bottom of nearly every Windows product. It encapsulates an [RSS MenuItem](#) and brings the news feed more to the forefront of the user's attention. When a new (unread) article is discovered the icon can be set to flash on and off, or alternately open the article in a separate window automatically.



### 2.2.2 Configuring RSS StatusBar Panel

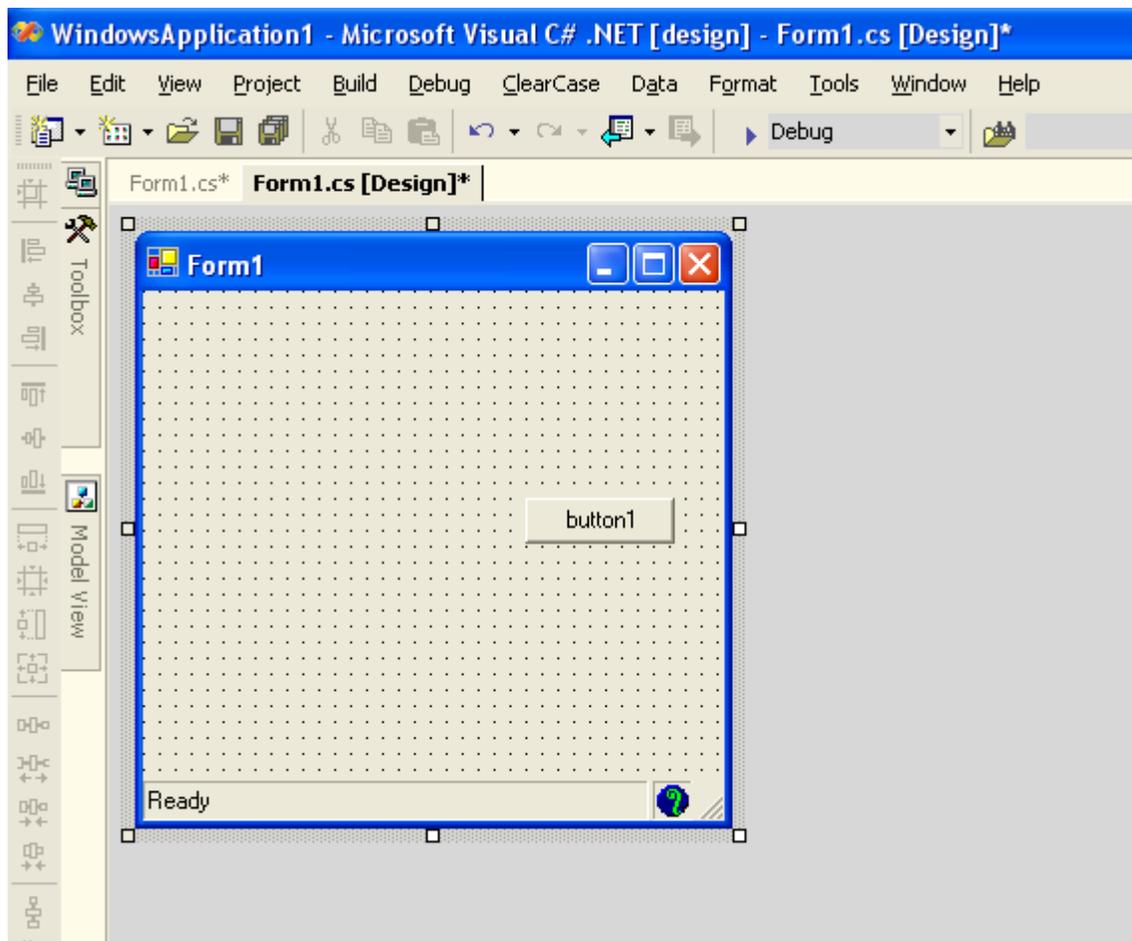
The RSS StatusBar Panel can be configured as a visual component in Microsoft Visual Studio, as shown below:



The parameters are very similar to the RSS MenuItem's parameters, with these notable additions:

- StatusBar**      The StatusBar which the component is to be added to
- CustomerIcon**    Your Icon. This is the icon That is displayed in the panel (only in licensed version)

Once the component is configured the nominated StatusBar has a new icon-sized panel as shown below. Note that other panels may be added to the StatusBar in the normal manner.



## Configuring without an IDE

The RSS StatusBar Panel can be configured using the following code snippet:

```
[C#]
using Haumohio.RSS;

    private RssStatusBarPanelControl rssSPControl = new RssMenuItemControl();
    ...
    rssSPControl.Categorise = true;
    rssSPControl.CustomerIcon = myCompanyIcon;
    rssSPControl.CompanyRegistrationEmail = "sales@haumohio.com";
    rssSPControl.RssFeedUrl = "http://www.haumohio.com/haumohio.xml";
    rssSPControl.StatusBar = statusBar1;
    ...
    rssSPControl .Fetch();

[VB]
Imports Haumohio.RSS
...
Dim rssSPControl AS RssStatusBarPanelControl = New RssStatusBarPanelControl()
rssSPControl.CustomerIcon = myCompanyIcon
rssSPControl.CompanyRegistrationEmail = "sales@haumohio.com"
rssSPControl.RssFeedUrl = "http://www.haumohio.com/haumohio.xml"
rssSPControl.StatusBar = statusBar1
...
rssSPControl .Fetch()
```

### 3 Installing the RSS Developer's Pack

The RssStatusPanel control uses no third party controls or libraries, and needs no special installation either on the developer's machine or on the user's machine. To install it simply add a reference to the library **Haumohio.RSS.Controls.dll** to your project.

There is no runtime licence required and the dll may be distributed with your application. [Licensing](#) allows the components to read from a single registered news feed per instance of each component, on any number of machines around the world.

### 4 Licensing components

A company may use the components in this pack to read any number of *registered* news feeds. The licence is checked as follows:

1. Each component is assigned only one news feed (although multiple instances of components may read the same news feed).
2. Each component is marked as belonging to you by setting the **CompanyRegistrationEmail** property.
3. The **Fetch()** method is called on each component.
4. The component first checks with Haumohio whether the news feed is registered against the provided email address.
5. The news feed is read from the nominated location, and displayed appropriately.

If the news feed is not deemed as registered against the provided email address, the display is restricted in the following ways:

- Categorisation is disabled
- A maximum of two (2) articles are shown per news feed
- The haumohio icon is shown in the StatusBar Panel, rather than the assigned icon
- A purchase link is added to the sub-menus

In all other ways the components are fully functional.

# Index

## - A -

Activate 3  
Article 2

## - C -

Categorise 3  
CompanyRegistrationEmail 3  
Configure 3  
CustomerIcon 5

## - D -

Description 2  
Distribution 8

## - F -

FeedWrite 2  
Fetch 3

## - I -

Icon 5  
Installation 8  
Introduction 2  
ItemIndex 3

## - L -

Licensing 8  
LineAfter 3  
LineBefore 3

## - M -

Menu 2

## - P -

Panel 5

## - R -

Read 2  
Reference 8  
Registry 2  
Restriction 8  
RSS Standards 2  
RSSFeedUrl 3

## - S -

StatusBar 5

## - U -

Unread 2

## - X -

Xcopy 8