Learning Layouts, Elements, and Buttons Transcript

Configurators can be complicated. By designing a user interface that guides your customer through the configuration process, you can improve their experience.

You build the UI of your configurator by combining layouts, elements, and buttons.

By the end of this course, you'll be able to use the various layout components.

Explain the different elements that you can add to your configurator

And Implement buttons and actions.

Select the right arrow icon to begin.

Objectives

- Layouts
- Elements
- Buttons

Layouts

To make your configurator easier to use, you must organize the elements in the configurator user interface, or "UI". For example, you might want to display a group of fields related to each other, or to display a list of options in a grid.

Layouts are the foundation for your UI design. They organize the various components of your configurator. Follow along to learn about the layouts available: Pages, Containers, Grids, Groups, Tabs, Expanders, and Accordions.

First, pages. A configurator must have at least one page. For each page in your configurator, the user can see a page icon along a side of the screen. They select that icon and the content from that page displays. If needed, you can even nest your pages.

To add a page, edit your configurator and press the add button on the pages section of the UI node. That new page appears at the bottom of the list of pages.

Select the page to edit its properties, like the name, label, and icon.

Pages are the foundation of your configurator UI. All other elements and buttons must appear within a page. You can create many other elements by clicking the add icon shown on the right of any page node in the explorer: a list of elements you can create inside it appears.

Containers let you organize and move around groups of elements as a single item. Select the Container node in the explorer to control how elements appear within it.

For example, you can layout the items in a container vertically or horizontally, or even use absolute positioning for pixel-perfect alignments.

When you place any element within a container, that element gains a new set of properties labelled Position. Drag an element out of a container, and the Position properties disappear. You can learn more about how to position an element within a container in the documentation.

Grids align multiple elements easily. Build a grid by first creating a Grid Row. Then select the add icon to create each grid column you want inside it. From there, add elements to display within each grid column.

Here you see 3 grid columns with a text asset at the top and 2 field icons below to create this grid.

Notice that you can control the width of each column by setting it's Relative Width property.

Groups display elements together. They're like containers, but have simpler layout and display options. Groups can display an optional label across the top.

The Tab Control layout allows you to have groups of elements organized into different tabs. Users can select a tab in the tab control to display that tab's elements.

In the scene designer, first create a tab control. Then, select the add icon on the Tab Control element to add a new tab. Tabs can be nested by placing a second tab control inside an existing tab.

Expanders let you hide and reveal elements. Your user selects the header of an expander to reveal or hide its contents.

Multiple expanders can be organized into an Accordion. An accordion is like a tab bar running vertically down the screen, instead of horizontally across the screen.

Inside an accordion, only one expander can be open at a time. When you open one expander, the other expanders in that accordion close. Like a tab bar, an accordion protects you from overwhelming your user with too much information at once.

These layouts are all great ways to group and display the elements of your configurator. Next, lets talk about the elements that we put in them.

Select the right arrow icon to continue.

Elements

Layouts help organize your configurator UI, like shelves would help you organize a closet. You fill those layouts with the pieces of information your user needs to configure the product. These pieces of information are called elements.

Elements allow you to either give information to users or gather information from them.

Use field elements to gather information. Use other elements -- like HTML, Media, and Text elements -- to give information.

As you've already learned, Field properties change the way a field behaves. Let's look at the control property of a field, because that changes the field's appearance.

There are many Control types for fields. For example, they allow your user to type their selection (in a textbox or numberbox), or drag their selection (in a number slider), or choose from a list of choices (in a select list, radio, or image select).

As you design your configurator, decide which control type makes data entry easiest for each field. You can easily change the control type of a field: it doesn't change the data inside the field, so your Snap rules won't be impacted.

See the documentation for examples of these field controls and more.

The HTML element can display simple HTML for display within the configurator. You can type HTML code into the element, use simple markup text by clicking the helper buttons across the top, or use a value rule to calculate the HTML dynamically during runtime.

The Media element displays an image, movie, or other asset found in the Media folder. Adding media elements can make your UI more attractive or easier to understand through the use of icons or pictures.

Select the Image property to choose the media displayed inside the element, and set the Max Width and Height to control its size.

The Text element is like a billboard. It displays text information to your user. You can set the styles, weight, and content. Remember, the text element is read-only: your user cannot change it.

Text elements are useful as logical headings or helpful descriptions.

Use all these elements, organized by your layouts, to present users with a clean and easy to use configurator.

Select the right arrow Icon for a quick knowledge check.

Buttons

Buttons and Actions create clickable areas that perform some activity when your user wants it. You define this activity with Snap rules.

The only difference between buttons and actions is where your user sees them in the configurator.

Buttons, like other elements, can be placed anywhere on a page.

First create your button by pressing the add icon on any layout that supports it, like a page or group.

Select the plus icon next to the button to add a Snap workspace. The code in this workspace executes when your user presses the button in the configurator.

You can change the appearance of the button. Under Styles, you can set the width, style, color, and icon for the button.

If you have many buttons with a similar purpose, you can group them together. A Dropdown button contains a set of buttons. When the user selects one of the buttons within it, the configurator runs it's Snap code.

You can also create a Popup button to present a mini-UI with a set of elements inside. This popup can contain fields, text, or other elements.

If you have many buttons, organize them into a toolbar. A tool bar displays Buttons and Dropdown Buttons together in a long strip. This is handy if you have a set of related functions that you want to keep near each other.

Buttons are a flexible way to give your user control. But they are like other elements: they must appear on a page. What if your configurator has an important button that should always be visible, no matter which page your user sees?

Actions solve this problem. Actions are buttons which can be always visible in a special part of the configurator: the display bar shown across the top of all pages.

Actions are not part of the page-based UI, so you won't find them under the UI node in the designer. They are listed under the "actions" section.

Other than their location, actions perform just like buttons. You can change their name or icon, and define the Snap code that runs when they are clicked.

When you run the configurator, actions appear near the upper right corner by default.

Select the right arrow icon to continue to the Recap.

Recap

Layouts, Elements, and Buttons are help you display information in your configurator, gather information from your user, and guide your user through the configuration process. Use these UI tools to simplify the information your user sees into manageable ideas, so they can make decisions about your product easily.

You should now be able to use the various layout components.

Explain the different elements that you can add to your configurator

And Build buttons and actions to make your user experience better.

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