



Delivering Adobe[®] Flash[®] Content from Helix Server via HTTP Progressive Download

Revised June 1, 2009



RealNetworks, Inc.

2601 Elliott Avenue, Suite 1000
Seattle, WA 98121
U.S.A.

<http://www.realnetworks.com>
<http://www.real.com>

©2009 RealNetworks, Inc. Patents pending. All rights reserved. RealNetworks, RealPlayer, Rhapsody, RealArcade, RealProducer, RealAudio, RealVideo, the Real logo, Helix, Helix DNA and the Helix logo are either trademarks or registered trademarks of RealNetworks, Inc. in the United States of America and other countries.

All other trade names, trademarks, or registered trademarks are trade names, trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective companies.

Information in this document is subject to change without notice. No part of this document may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, for any purpose, without the express written permission of RealNetworks, Inc.



Overview

This guide describes how to use Helix Server to deliver Flash Video (.flv) and Flash animation files (.swf) using HTTP progressive download.

Introduction

In recent years, use of Adobe Flash formats for video and animation have increased on web sites and blogs dedicated to news, sports, entertainment, online learning and user-generated content. With the increasing popularity of Flash content, some RealNetworks customers have asked about the possibility of hosting Flash content from Helix Server.

With some minor configuration changes Helix Server is capable of supporting Flash. This guide provides step-by-step instruction for using Helix Server to deliver Flash content using HTTP progressive download. This use scenario is commonly used by many Helix customers and can be considered a viable solution with just a couple caveats (see below).

RealNetworks continues to develop solutions for multi-format media delivery, including delivery of Flash content.

Helix Server Configuration

The basic requirement for Flash download is to turn on HTTP delivery in Helix Server. HTTP delivery can be enabled per path or mount point.

HTTP delivery is enabled by using the Helix Administrator web-based configuration tool. The URL for this web page, substituting the appropriate hostname and port number, is:

```
http://hostname:admin_port/admin/index.html
```

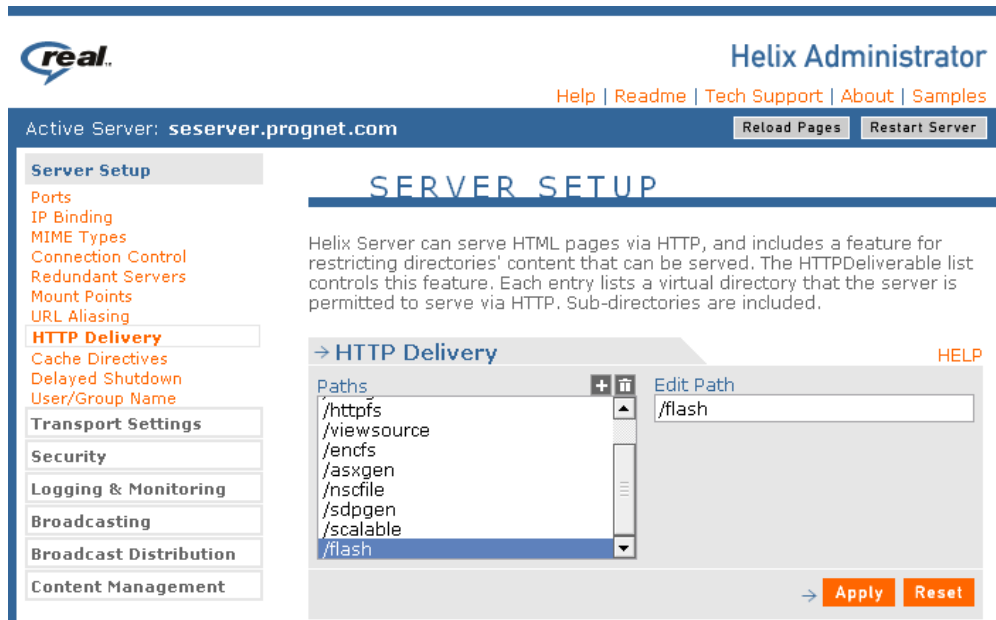
Note that if you are logged into the same server where Helix Server is installed then you can use localhost for the hostname.

The port used for the administration console (admin_port, above) is set to a random value when Helix Server is installed. If you do not remember the port number assigned then you can open the Helix Server configuration and look for the AdminPort setting. This file is named rmserver.cfg and is located at the



top level of the Helix Server installation directory. On Windows this is, by default, in C:\Program Files\Real\Helix Server. On Linux and Solaris there is not a default installation path but common locations are /opt or /usr/local.

Once the Helix Administrator is open, expand the Server Setup section and select the HTTP Delivery page as seen here.



To add a new HTTP Delivery rule, click the icon with a "plus" symbol that is above the Paths list.

Although HTTP Delivery is not enabled for most paths by default, it can be enabled for all content by entering a single forward slash ("/") into the Edit Path text box just as in the above screenshot.

To enable HTTP Delivery for a particular path or mount point, simply enter as many path elements as necessary. For instance, if you have a directory named "flash" within your default content directory then you could create an entry for /flash.

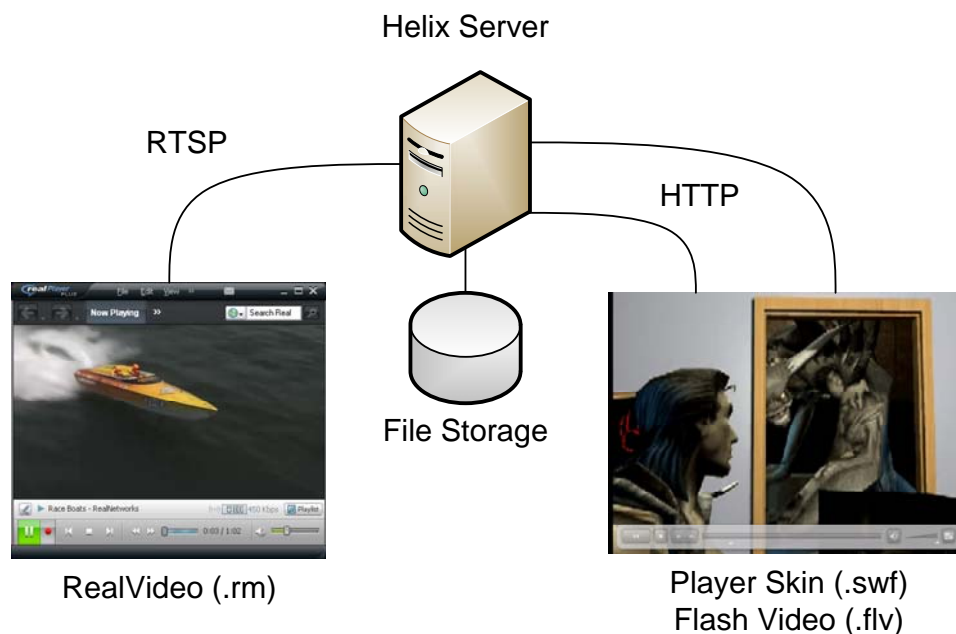
A more complicated example would be /folder1/folder2/folder3. Using that path would result in folder1 and folder2 content not being deliverable via HTTP but content in folder3 would be deliverable via HTTP. Note that this setting is applied to all subfolders as well. For example, content in /folder1/folder2/folder3/folder4 would also be deliverable via HTTP.

A Couple Caveats

It should be noted that there is some risk to the security of streamed content when HTTP delivery has been enabled. That is, given the URL, content can be downloaded by any HTTP client.

To reduce the risk of content intended for streaming being downloaded, it is recommended that content intended for HTTP delivery be separated from content that is not. This may require different paths to be used for related content (for example, a videotaped lecture made available in both Flash Video and Windows Media), but the benefit is that the non-HTTP-deliverable content (in this case the .wm file) will not be downloadable via HTTP.

Once HTTP delivery has been enabled in Helix Server, Flash Video (.flv) and Flash animation files (.swf) can be placed into the Helix Server content directory for delivery, as seen in this diagram.



Also note that Flash delivery via HTTP in the Helix Server is not compatible with Helix Security Manager (DAUC) or with Commerce Rules in Helix Server. Flash content should not be hosted on Helix Server in these scenarios.



Conclusion

Helix Server is able to deliver Flash content via HTTP progressive download. For most common use cases that don't require advanced features, Helix Server provides an excellent solution for Flash delivery.

The Helix Media Delivery Platform continues to add support for popular formats, run on current versions of multiple operating systems and keep pace with industry standards for streaming and downloadable media, making it the best choice for multi-format media delivery.