



Snapshot
Plug-in Guide
1.1.0.142446







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1 Introduction

The Escenic Content Engine's Snapshot plug-in provides a service for creating nightly backups of all the content items on specified section pages of a publication. The Snapshot plug-in is primarily intended for creating backups of Widget Framework configurations (that is config sections and the widgets in those sections).

Once it has been installed and correctly configured, the Snapshot plug-in creates a backup of the specified section pages at 02:00 every night.

A Snapshot backup contains:

- All the sections specified in the Snapshot configuration file, including section parameters and access rights
- The active section pages of the specified sections
- All content items that:
 - are desked on one of the selected active section pages
 - belong to one of the specified sections (that is, have one of the specified sections as their home section)

A Snapshot backup does **not** contain:

- Content items that belong to a specified section but are not desked on one of the selected active section pages. Any such content items will in fact be deleted when a backup is restored.
- Content items that are desked on one of the selected active section pages but do not belong to one of the specified sections.

The Snapshot plug-in can be configured to create backups of multiple publications. The generated backups are stored as new publications with names of the form:

publication-name-backup

The plug-in only maintains one backup of each publication: the backups are overwritten each night.

.....
The Snapshot plug-in cannot handle binary content items. You must therefore ensure that the active section pages of your specified sections do not contain any binary content items such as images or video clips.
.....

The Snapshot plug-in also includes an extension to the Escenic Admin web application, from which you can both create snapshots of publications on demand, and restore publications from snapshots. See [section 4.1](#) for details.

Restoring a publication:

1. Deletes all content items in the specified sections.

2. Deletes all the specified sections, including their section pages, section parameters and access rights.
3. Restores the sections and their content items from the latest snapshot.



2 Using Snapshot

The Snapshot plug-in operates in the background and does not change the way you use Content Engine components in any way. Once you have configured it correctly, it automatically creates backups of specified publication sections at 02:02 every night. You can, however, also create backups of publications manually if required, and restore publications from backups (see ??).





3 Installation

The following preconditions must be met before you can install the Snapshot 1.1.0.142446 plug-in:

- The Content Engine and Escenic assembly tool have been installed as described in the **Escenic Content Engine Installation Guide** and are in working order.
- You have the required plug-in distribution file `snapshot-1.1.0.142446.zip`.

3.1 Conventions

The instructions in the following section assume that you have a standard Content Engine installation, as described in the **Escenic Content Engine Installation Guide**. *escenic-home* is used to refer to the `/opt/escenic` folder under which both the Content Engine itself and all plug-ins are installed.

The Content Engine and the software it depends on may be installed on one or several host machines depending on the type of installation required. In order to unambiguously identify the machines on which various installation actions must be carried out, the **Escenic Content Engine Installation Guide** defines a set of special host names that are used throughout the manual.

Some of these names are also used here:

assembly-host

The machine used to assemble the various Content Engine components into an enterprise archive or .EAR file.

engine-host

The machine(s) used to host application servers and Content Engine instances.

editorial-host

engine-host(s) that are used solely for (internal) editorial purposes.

The host names always appear in a bold typeface. If you are installing everything on one host you can, of course, ignore them: you can just do everything on the same machine. If you are creating a larger multi-host installation, then they should help ensure that you do things in the right places.

3.2 Snapshot Installation

Installing Snapshot involves the following steps:

1. Log in as `escenic` on your **assembly-host**.
2. Download the Snapshot distribution. If you have a multi-host installation with shared folders as described in the **Escenic Content Engine**

Installation Guide, then it is a good idea to download the distribution to your shared `/mnt/download` folder:

```
$ cd /mnt/download
$ wget http://user:password@technet.escenic.com/downloads/release/56/snapshot-1.1.0.142446.zip
```

Otherwise, download it to some temporary location of your choice.

3. If the folder `/opt/escenic/engine/plugins` does not already exist, create it:

```
$ mkdir /opt/escenic/engine/plugins
```

4. Unpack the Snapshot distribution file:

```
$ cd /opt/escenic/engine/plugins
$ unzip /mnt/download/snapshot-1.1.0.142446.zip
```

This will result in the creation of an `/opt/escenic/engine/plugins/snapshot` folder.

5. Log in as **escenic** on your **assembly-host**.
6. Run the **ece** script to re-assemble your Content Engine applications.

```
$ ece assemble
```

This generates an EAR file (`/var/cache/escenic/engine.ear`) that you can deploy on all your **engine-hosts**.

7. -----
If you have a single-host installation, then skip this step.

On each **engine-host** on which you wish to run the Snapshot plug-in, copy `/var/cache/escenic/engine.ear` from the **assembly-host**. If you have installed an SSH server on the **assembly-host** and SSH clients on your **engine-hosts**, then you can do this as follows:

```
$ scp -r escenic@assembly-host-ip-address:/var/cache/escenic/engine.ear /var/cache/escenic/
```

where *assembly-host-ip-address* is the host name or IP address of your **assembly-host**.

8. On each **engine-host** on which you wish to run the Snapshot plug-in, deploy the EAR file and restart the Content Engine by entering:

```
$ ece stop
$ ece deploy
$ ece start
```

It only really makes sense to run the Snapshot plug-in on **editorial hosts**.

3.3 Verify the Installation

To verify the status of the Snapshot plug-in, open the Escenic Admin web application (usually located at `http://server/escenic-admin`) and click on **View installed plug-ins**. The status of all currently installed plug-ins is shown here, and indicated as follows:



-  The plug-in is correctly installed.
-  The plug-in is not correctly installed.



4 Configuration

In order to be able to use the Snapshot plug-in after installing it (see [chapter 3](#)) you must create a configuration file in which you specify:

- The publications for which backups are to be created.
- Which sections of each publication are to be included in the backups.

To configure the plug-in:

1. Copy `/opt/escenic/engine/plugins/snapshot/misc/siteconfig/com/escenic/snapshot/Snapshot.properties` to your common configuration layer. For example:

```
$ mkdir -p /etc/escenic/engine/common/com/escenic/snapshot/
$ cp /opt/escenic/engine/plugins/snapshot/misc/siteconfig/com/escenic/snapshot/
Snapshot.properties \
/etc/escenic/engine/common
/com/escenic/snapshot/Snapshot.properties
```

2. The configuration file specifies which sections of which publications are to be backed up. It must contain one or more lines like this:

```
publications.publication-name=unique_section_names
```

where:

- *publication-name* is the name of one of your publications.
- *unique_section_names* is a comma-separated list of the sections in the publication that you want to be backed up. The sections must be specified using their unique names.

This configuration file, for example:

```
publications.dailynews=config
publications.weeklygossip=config.section,config.article
```

specifies that snapshots are to be created for two publications: **dailynews** and **weeklygossip**. The **dailynews** snapshot will contain a backup of the section with the unique name **config**, while the **weeklygossip** snapshot will contain a backup of the sections with the unique names **config.section** and **config.article**.

3. Restart the Content Engine.
4. Start a browser and go to `http://host-name/escenic-admin/do/services/display` to verify that the **Snapshot** service is running. If the service is not correctly configured you will see an error message describing the problem.

4.1 Administration

Administration tasks related to the Snapshot plug-in include:

- Creating snapshots manually if required.

- Restoring publications from snapshots when required.
- Monitoring the service.

The Snapshot plug-in adds a **Manage Snapshots** page to the `escenic-admin` web app, from which you can both create and restore snapshots.

4.1.1 Creating a Snapshot

The Snapshot plug-in automatically creates snapshots of all the publications you have selected for backup, every night at 02:00. However, you may occasionally want to manually create a snapshot at to some other time, in particular when setting up and testing the plug-in. To do this:

1. Start a browser and go to `http://host-name/escenic-admin`
2. Click the **Manage Snapshots** link.
3. Click the **Create snapshot** link of the publication you want to back up.
4. Click **Create the snapshot**.

You can only create snapshots of publications that have been correctly configured as described in [chapter 4](#). Publications that have not been configured will not be listed on the **Manage Snapshots** page.

4.1.2 Restoring a Publication

To restore a publication from a snapshot:

1. Start a browser and go to `http://host-name/escenic-admin`
2. Click the **Manage Snapshots** link.
3. Click the **Restore** link for the publication you wish to restore.
4. Click **Restore publication**.
5. Confirm that you want to restore the publication. The plug-in then:
 - Deletes all the content items in the backed-up sections of the publication.
 - Deletes all the backed-up sections, including their section pages, section parameters and access rights.
 - Restores the sections and their content items from the latest snapshot.

The restore operation is performed in a single database transaction, so if anything fails the entire operation is rolled back.

4.1.3 Monitoring the Snapshot Service

If the creation of a backup fails, then `com.escenic.snapshot.SnapshotService` logs a **FATAL** error.

It is very important to monitor the log file and take appropriate action if the Snapshot service starts to report **FATAL** errors.