

**OMNIS Studio**

for Windows, Linux, and MacOS

Rapid Application Development tools

**omnis.net**



# Welcome...

Thank you for choosing **Omnis Studio**. It has evolved over several years to be a powerful, flexible, and intuitive development tool, particularly useful for producing scalable database-driven business solutions.

As a dedicated team of engineers, we are proud of the results of our efforts and are constantly revising and updating Studio, incorporating new ideas from our customers and staff to make it one of the most friendly and adaptable programs on the market.

If you are new to Omnis, you will soon discover that Studio has a high degree of functionality and will allow you to produce solutions for many environments quickly and easily, including cross-platform, client-server and the web. You will find links to just a few of the amazing solutions produced in Omnis at our website: **[www.omnis.net](http://www.omnis.net)**.

I hope very much that you enjoy your experience of using Omnis Studio, that you will become part of our rapidly growing community, and that you have many successful and rewarding years as an Omnis developer.

Gwyneth Gibbs  
President,  
OMNIS Software



# About Omnis Studio

**Omnis Studio** is one of the world's most powerful rapid application development environments. With it you can quickly and easily design unique business solutions for anything from looking after your address book to running an entire nation. What's more, you can develop your application on one platform and deploy it to many others including Linux, Windows 95/98, NT, MacOS and via the web using Omnis Web Client technology. You can also access your data from Oracle, Sybase, Informix, DB2 or via ODBC.

Using Omnis Studio, you can create any type of application and deploy it to the web using our unique **Omnis Web Client™** technology. The Omnis Web Client lets you embed your application into a standard web page and allows anyone, anywhere in the world, to access your data and information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can build web forms using Omnis Studio's own 4GL and standard web objects, so no java and no complex html is required. You can deploy your Omnis web applica-

tion to a Linux server and using the Omnis Web Client anyone can access it using a Windows, Macintosh, or Linux web browser.

## Contents

Welcome . . . . .	2
About Omnis Studio . . . . .	3
When you first run Omnis Studio . . . . .	4
Learn quickly with the Application Builder . . . . .	5
Tutorial . . . . .	9
Glossary . . . . .	18
License Agreement . . . . .	20
Installation . . . . .	24
Contact Information . . . . .	24
Support . . . . .	24

# When you first run Omnis Studio...



When you first run Omnis Studio, you are prompted for your Name, Company name, and Serial number (not required for evaluation). The serial number is on the back of the CD case.

Having entered your serial number the **Welcome application** appears. The **New Users** topic contains lots of information about Omnis and a short tutorial

designed especially for beginners. The first part of this tutorial is printed in this booklet to help you get started. The **Knowledge Store** lets you search the Omnis help files and technical notes.

In the **New Users** section the Application Builder lets you create simple business applications from scratch, the Omnis IDE topic describes the tools available in Omnis, while the Omnis Web Solutions topic describes how you can create web

applications using the Omnis Web Client. The Examples topic contains many sample libraries showing the wealth of design features and components available in Omnis.

A brief tour through all these sections will help you gain an insight into the power and flexibility of Omnis Studio.

# Learn quickly with the Application Builder

A great way to get up to speed with Omnis is to play with the Application Builder. As well as being a fast, intuitive way to develop applications, it's also an excellent learning tool, thanks to its quick, open source assembly of code that you can modify to suit your needs.

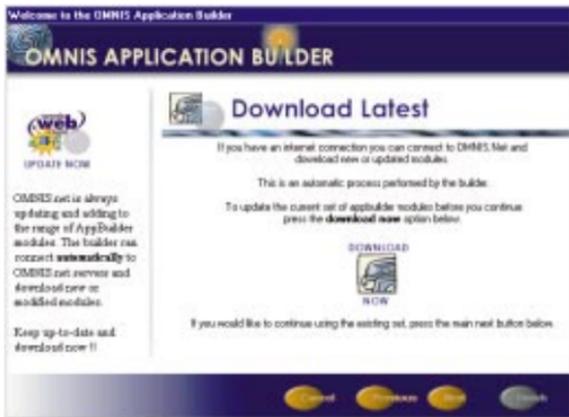
Click the APP BUILDER option on the New Users screen and the builder quickly takes you through all the necessary steps. Follow them and in minutes you'll create an application that would otherwise take hours to develop using traditional programming tools and methods.

## More than just a wizard

Each step you take with the Application Builder is clear and informative, giving a short explanation of what it's doing and why. When you start your application, it presents you with a report detailing all the components the Application Builder has created, so you can see exactly what you've done.



Because the code created is open source, it's easy to open the method editor for any individual component and examine the code behind it. Through this, you'll learn what goes into an Omnis Studio program. Edit the code to tailor the functionality to suit your needs, and even cut/copy blocks of code and paste them into other components.



## Download the latest templates from our website

While the Application Builder is running, you can download the latest templates to ensure your application's look-and-feel are right up-to-date.

## A choice of data access

Omnis DML (Omnis' own built-in database) is superb for straightforward, native database applications, or you might prefer Omnis SQL (local).

Choose SQL (server based) to allow your application to access other databases such as Oracle, DB2, Informix, Sybase etc.



## Easy data selection

As well as the standard set of fields for each data set, you can add extra fields using drag-and-drop. Your choice of icon determines the field type.

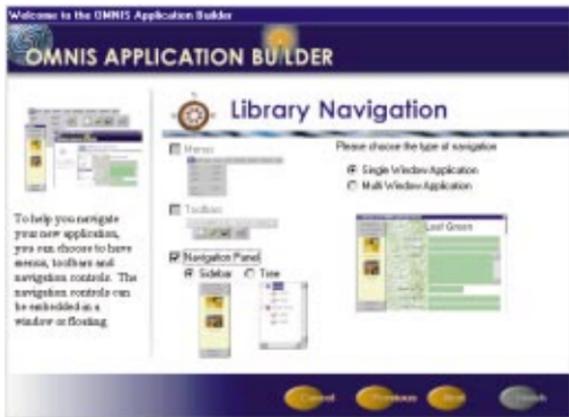
## A choice of navigation control types

Make it as friendly as you like for the end users you have in mind.

## Lots of Window, Internet Browser and Report display themes to choose from

You can also customize them by selecting different colors from the palette.

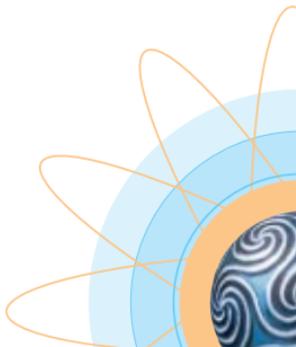
Take advantage of the Omnis Web Client technology to understand what's behind Omnis-created web components. Specify the look-and-feel in a browser (Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator) then open the source code to see how it was done.





## It's easy to see what you've created

When you've gone through all the windows, click **Finish** and the **Application Builder** creates and opens your application. Click to start it and you'll get a report detailing all the components you've created, so you'll know exactly what you've got. Open the library and fine-tune the components to suit your exact needs.



# Tutorial: Creating an Omnis application in minutes!

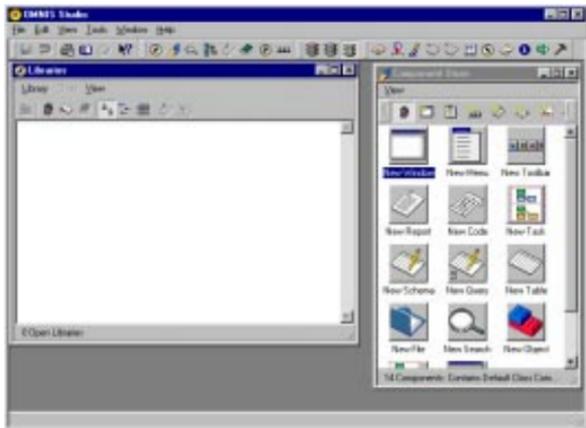
This tutorial shows you how to create an Omnis application to browse a picture database, in this case, a portfolio of sample tv, cd, and book designs undertaken by a design agency. You could however use the application to store any type of picture data including a photo library. To run the tutorial you need to launch Omnis, open the Welcome application, and select the **New Users** topic.

The tutorial shows you how to create the file structure required in the database, and shows you how to create a simple data entry window to browse and insert new pictures.

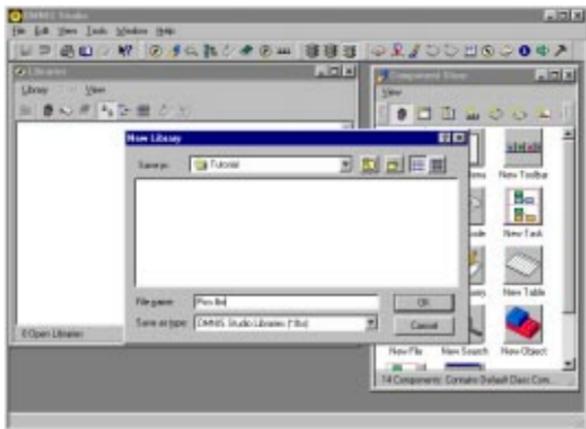
The tutorial in the Welcome application takes you another stage further by showing you how to view the database in a web browser and describes how you could deploy the application to the web.



There is a glossary on page 18 that explains some of the terms used in the tutorial and Omnis as a whole. Throughout the tutorial, words and phrases that are listed in the glossary are shown in italic and highlighted in blue, *like this*. Text shown in **bold** are options that you select, or names you need to enter.

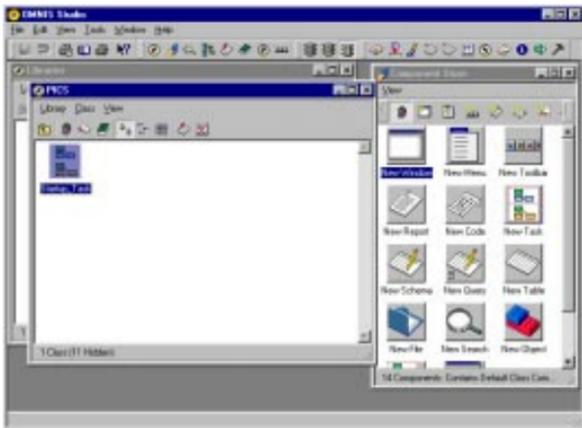


1. If you are running this tutorial from the Welcome application you won't need to start Omnis, otherwise, double-click on the Omnis icon on your Desktop or in the Windows Explorer to start Omnis. When you start Omnis, the Library or Class *Browser* (on the left) and the *Component Store* (on the right) should appear. You'll see what these do later. If any Omnis applications are currently open, they will appear in the Library Browser.

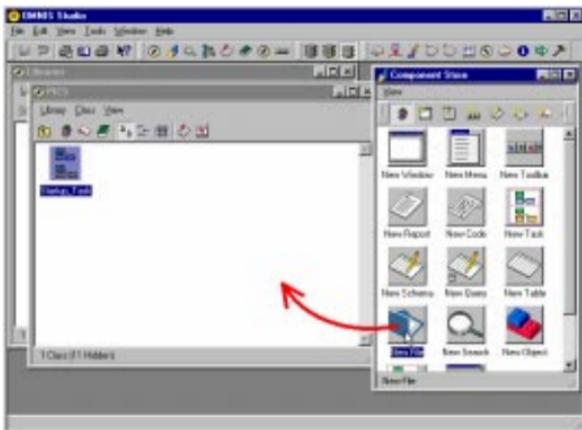


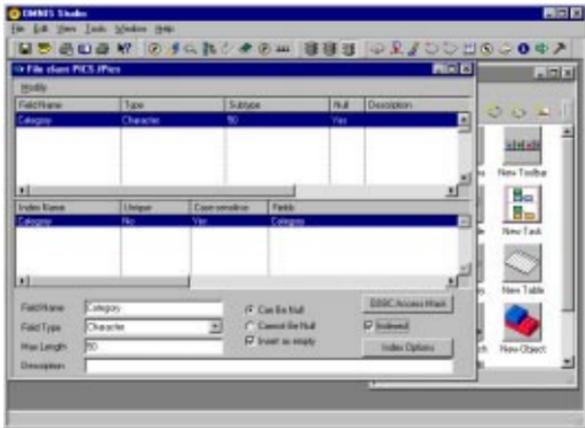
2. The starting point for your Omnis application is an Omnis *library*. A library stores all the windows, menus, reports, and other objects in your application. To create a library, press **F2/Cmnd-2** or click on the Library Browser to bring it to the top, then select the **Library>>New** menu option on the Browser menu bar. Open the Welcome/Tutorial folder, enter the name **PICS.LBS** and click on OK. The .lbs extension is not required on MacOS, but if you are working in a cross-platform environment, file extensions do help you identify file types.

3. When you create or open a library it appears in the Library Browser. To view the contents of a library, you double-click on the library icon. A second Browser window is opened displaying the contents of your library. At this stage, your library contains a *Startup Task* which simply initializes the library when it starts up.

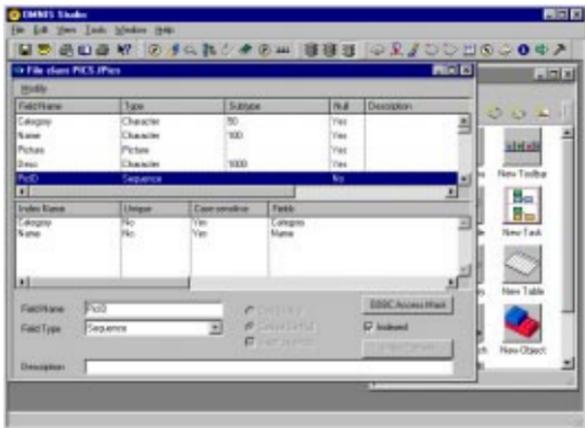


4. To create the database structure in your library you need to create an Omnis *file class*. File classes define the column names and data types for the information stored in your database. To create a file class, press **F3/Cmnd-3** or click on the Component Store to bring it to the top. Drag the **New File** icon onto the Class Browser, release the mouse, name the class **fPics** (see Class Naming Conventions on page 15), and press Return. The fPics file appears in the Class Browser.





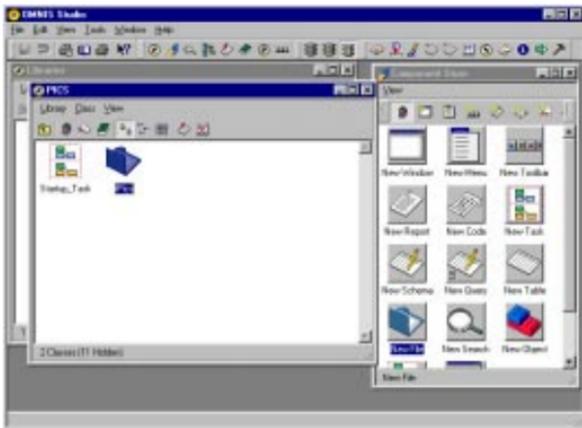
5. Double-click on the fPics file to open the file class editor. The file editor lets you add the name and *data type* of each *column* or field in your database. To create the first column or field, enter the name **Category**. The name is entered at the bottom of the editor window. Next, tab to the Field type box and choose the *Character* type. Next, tab to the Max length box and enter **50** as the maximum length. Lastly, click on the Indexed check box (near the bottom right corner of the window). Don't worry about the other check boxes and fields in the file editor, you can accept all the default settings.



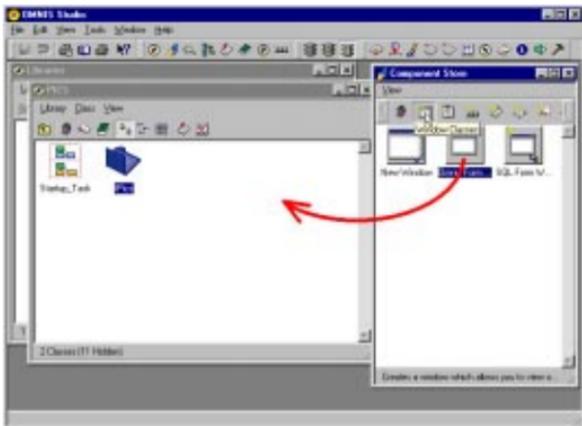
6. To create a second column or field in the fPics file class press **Ctrl/Cmnd-N**, enter **Name** in the Field name box, choose *Character* as the field type, enter 100 as the maximum length, and check the Indexed check box. To create each new column or field in the file class, press **Ctrl/Cmnd-N**, enter the field name, and select the appropriate field types and subtypes, as follows. The *Sequence* field called PicID will provide a unique reference for each data record.

Field name	Type/Length	Indexed?
Category	Character 50	Yes
Name	Character 100	Yes
Picture	Picture	No
Desc	Character 1000	No
PicID	Sequence	Indexed automatically

7. When you have finished modifying a class in Omnis you can simply close it to save it, or you can use the **Save** option from the **File menu** at any time. So, to save the fPics file class, close the file class editor. The browser should contain two classes, the Startup\_Task and fPics.



8. Having created the data file structure for your database, you can create a **window** or **form** to browse and insert data. Press **F3/Cmnd-3** to open the Component Store or bring it to the top. Click on the **Window Classes** button in the top toolbar (second from left). Drag the Omnis Form **Wizard** from the Component Store and drop it on your library in the Class Browser. Name the new form **wPics** and press Return. A wizard window is displayed.

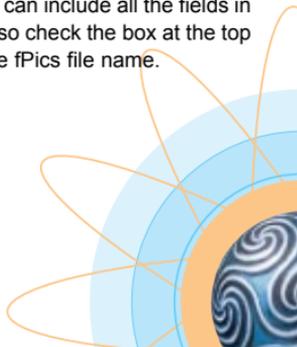




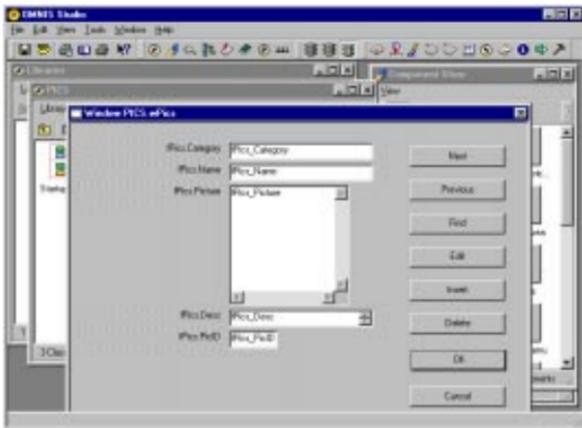
9. The form wizard lets you choose exactly what you want to include in your window or form. Keep the default setting, **One field per file field**, and click on the Next button.



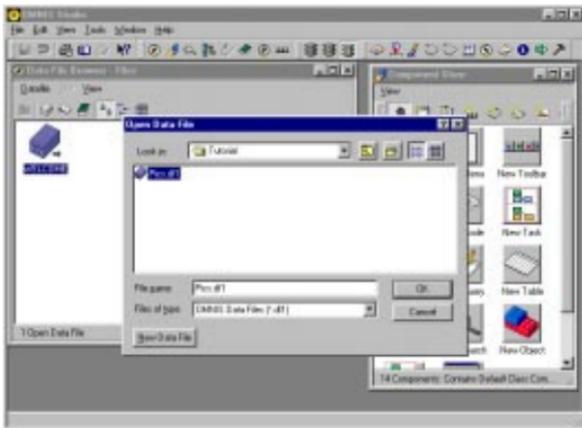
10. Expand the tree list by clicking on the + button. You should see the columns or fields you created in the file class: Name, Category, Picture, Desc, and PicID. The wizard lets you select individual fields, but in this case, you can include all the fields in the form, so check the box at the top next to the fPics file name.



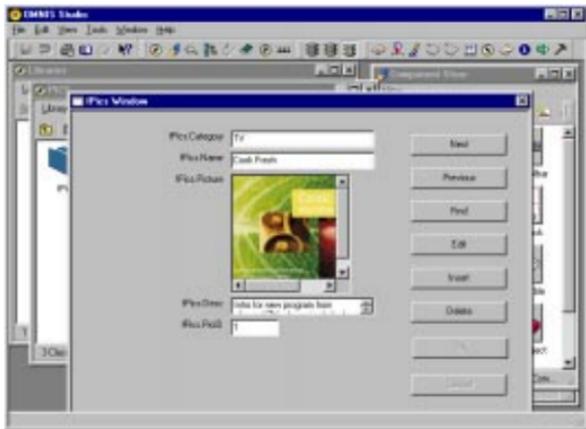
11. When the details for your form are complete, click on the **Create** button. Omnis creates the *form* for you automatically, based on the selections you have made in the wizard. When the wizard finishes, the form opens in *design mode*. You may notice the *Property Manager* is open (on the right) showing the properties of the form, but you don't need to use it at this stage.



12. Before you can try out the window you need to open the picture database or *data file*. Select the **Data file Browser** option from the **View** menu on the main Omnis menu bar. On the Data File Browser menu bar, select the **Open** option from the **Datfile** menu. Open the Welcome/Tutorial folder and double-click on the Omnis datafile called **PICS.DF1**. Make sure the PICS datafile is selected in the Data File Browser, then select the **Make Current** option from the **Datfile** menu; an arrow appears next to the PICS datafile icon to show it's the current one. Finally, close the Data File Browser.



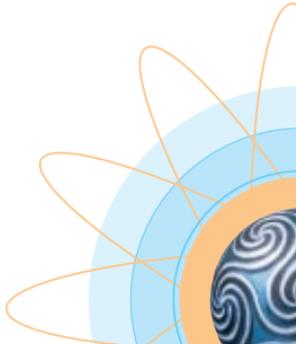
**Note:** if you want to create a database of your own, you simply need to create a new datafile in the Data File Browser and make it the current one.



13. In Omnis it's very easy to try out a window or form. Assuming the wPics form is the top window, press **Ctrl/Cmnd-T** to open or "Test" your window. The window is opened on top of the *design window*. Click on the **Next** button to locate the first record in the database. Click on **Next** a few more times to load each record in turn. You can click on **Previous** to go back to the previous record. When you reach the end of the database Omnis beeps, but you can click **Next** again to locate the first record.

**Note:** you can move fields and change the properties of fields in the design window at any time, using **Ctrl/Cmnd-T** to switch back and forth between design mode and runtime to try out your modifications. In design mode, you can try moving the fields or text labels, or resizing the picture field.

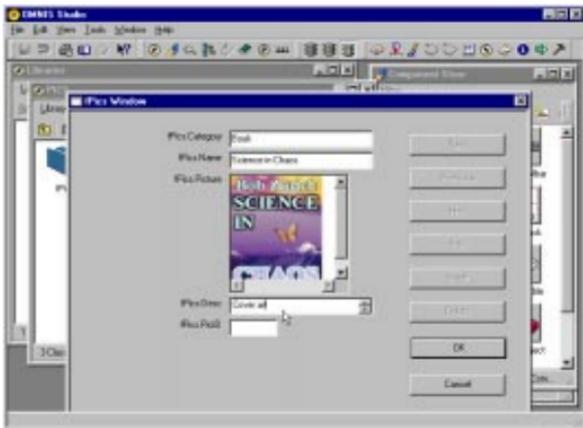
**Important:** you must be in runtime mode to enter data and design mode to continue with the tutorial.



14. To insert a new record, click on the **Insert** button and enter the details below, using the tab key to go from one entry field to the next. To insert the picture, tab to the picture field, select **Paste From File** in the **Edit menu**, select \*.jpg from the file type list, locate the **bookchaos.jpg** file in the Welcome/Tutorial folder, and click on OK. You do not need to enter anything into the PicID field, Omnis assigns a number automatically which uniquely identifies each data record. To save the complete data record, click on the **OK** button in the data entry window.

Here's a summary of the data you should enter:

Field	Enter
Category	Book
Name	Science in Chaos
Picture	bookchaos.jpg
Desc	Cover art for Bob Zurich's latest book, etc.
PicID	Leave blank: assigned automatically



**Saving your work.** Having inserted some data, close the wPics window and its design window; you can also close the Property Manager if you like. Now would be a good time to save your library. To save your library, press **F2/Cmnd-2** or click on the Class Browser to bring it to the top, and select **Library>>Save** from the browser menubar. At this stage you should have three classes, including the file and window classes you created, and the default Startup\_Task.

**What can I do next?** If you want to carry on developing your database application, the Welcome application tells you how to proceed. In Omnis Studio, open the Welcome application (if it's not already open), select the **New Users** topic, select the **Tutorial** topic, and go to step 16. The second part of the tutorial describes how you can create a form to browse your database in a web browser.

# Glossary

**Application** a software program that provides a solution to a specific business problem.

**Browser (OMNIS library or class)** an OMNIS window that displays libraries or the contents of the current library.

**Browser, Web** tool for browsing web pages and specifically Omnis remote forms, e.g. Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator.

**Character (data type)** stores character or number data, up to 10 million characters

**Class** a library object that contains the definition for a window, menu, form, etc.

**Column (database)** field definition in a database; a column has a name and data type.

**Component Store** an OMNIS window that contains classes, templates, and wizards.

**Control** an object, such as a button or pick list, that lets you interact with your database.

**Database** a collection of data organized for easy access

**Data file (Omnis database)** a disk file that stores an OMNIS database.

**Data type** defines the type of data that can be stored in a column, such as character, number, date, picture, binary, etc.

**Design mode (or development mode)** the mode that lets you create libraries, classes, or add objects to windows, reports, toolbars, etc; see also Runtime.

**Design window** a window in design mode that lets you add fields and buttons, etc.

**Edit menu** used for copying and pasting objects and data.

**Field (file class)** definition for a single column in your database; includes the name and data type.

**Field (window)** entry box or control in a window, used for viewing or inserting data.

**File (class)** defines the columns or fields in an OMNIS database.

**File menu** lets you create, open, or save a library, print classes and custom reports.

**Form (or window)** area of the screen containing fields and controls for browsing and inserting data into a database.

**IS (Information Services)** a department that provides computing, networking, and Internet services.

**LAN (Local Area Network)** a network of computers, servers, and printers, typically within a single organisation.

**Library, Omnis** a disk file that stores the objects in an application such as windows, menus, and reports.

**Number (data type)** stores number data with many different decimal and floating point subtypes.

**Object** any item in a class or library, such as a window or field.

**Picture (data type)** stores picture data in various formats such as bitmap, jpeg, and png.

**Property** a characteristic of an object; the properties of an object can define its appearance or behavior for example.

**Property Manager** an OMNIS tool that lets you view and change an object's properties.

**Record** a single row of data.

**Remote form (or web form)** an OMNIS window for displaying and browsing your database or application on the web.

**Remote task (class)** an OMNIS class that handles the connection between a client's web browser and your OMNIS application.

**Runtime** the mode in which you test or run your application; also the version of Omnis that lets you deploy and run your application.

**Sequence (data type)** provides a unique number or reference to each record in your database.

**Server** typically a file or data storage system, such as a database server; in the context of an Omnis web application, the server contains your Omnis web application and the Omnis runtime engine.

**Startup task (class)** contains startup code that initializes a library when it is opened.

**Subtype (data type)** specifies the length, date, or number type of a column or field in your database.

**Unique key (field)** a column or field that provides a unique reference for each record in your database.

**Window (class)** same as Form.

**Wizard (template)** automated set of tasks to help you build application components.

## Class Naming Conventions

It's not essential to use any system of naming classes in OMNIS, but to distinguish one type of class from another, it's usually a good idea. This tutorial suggests you put a letter (or letters) at the beginning of a class name to identify the type of class. For example, window names can start with the letter "w", such as the wPics window class, file classes can start with "f", remote forms "rf", and remote tasks "rt".

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## Installing Omnis for Linux using the .taz files

There is an rpm installer for Omnis Studio for Linux, but you may prefer to install Omnis using the .taz files supplied on the CD, in which case you must follow the instructions below very carefully.

The Development, Runtime, and Server versions of Omnis Studio for Linux are stored in the files called `omnis.taz`, `omnisrt.taz`, and `omserver.taz` respectively. The installation process is the same for each file, as follows. Copy the appropriate .taz file to the directory in which you wish to install Omnis. At the command line type:

```
tar -xzvf <name of .taz file>
```

Next you need to execute the `omset` script by using the command:

```
./omset
```

A file called `omnis1386` has been created in the Omnis Studio home directory. It is now possible to run Omnis Studio for Linux (either Development, Runtime, or Server) by executing the file `omnis1386` using the command.

```
./omnis1386
```

Please note that if you move the Omnis directory then you must execute `omset` again.

## Adding Omnis to the Gnome Desktop

An Image of the Omnis Studio Icon (`studio.png`) is present in the Omnis Studio home directory, this can be used on a Desktop Toolbar button to launch Omnis Studio. The following describes how you can add the Omnis program to the Gnome desktop (note this may not be true for other desktop environments).

1. Right-Click on Gnome taskbar and select 'Add New Launcher' from the menu.

2. When the 'Create launcher applet' dialog opens, enter:

'Omnis Studio' as the name

'Omnis Studio' as the comment

[Installation Path]/omnis1386 as the command

3. Click the 'Icon' button and select [Installation Path]/studio.png

4. Click OK

5. Click the new applet icon from the Gnome taskbar to launch Omnis.

## Installing Omnis Web Client under Linux

Copy the `omweb.taz` file and `omweb` script to the Netscape home (either `/usr/lib/netscape` or `/opt/netscape/communicator`). At the command line type:

```
./omweb
```

This will create an `omnis` folder at the same level as the `plugins` folder and place files in both of these folders. The script also creates some virtual links that are required to enable the use of the web client.

Please note that the Web Client plug-in does not work on versions of Open Linux earlier than 2.4.

# Installation

The Omnis Studio CD contains the Development, Runtime, Web Client and Server versions of Studio, in platform specific folders.

## Windows

There is a Setup program in the Windows folder which auto-detects your platform (Windows 95, 98, or NT) and offers either a 'New Users' or 'Experienced Users' installation. If you are using Omnis Studio for the first time we recommend you use the 'New Users' option as it will install both the development version of Studio and the Web Client plug-in for you. If you wish to do additional installations, choose the Experienced Users option. You can also install directly from the individual folders inside the INSTALL folder.

## Linux

There is a 'Setup' file in the Linux folder which performs rpm installations for you. If you are using Omnis Studio for the first time, choose 'New Users' and this will install the development version of Studio and the Web Client plug-in for you. If you want to customize your installation, choose the 'Experienced Users' option. The rpm automatically installs to 'usr/local/omnis'.

Alternatively, you can install Omnis Studio from .taz files which are also supplied on the CD, and described on the inside back cover of this booklet.

## PowerMac

There is an Installer program (Newuserinstall) inside the Mac folder which will install the development version of Studio. If you want to customise your installation, simply open the appropriate folders (Development, Runtime, Web Client) and install from there.

# Support

If you are having problems installing Omnis, we provide email only installation support during the first 30 days. Please email us at:

## Installation Support

**US:** [us\\_install\\_support@omnis.net](mailto:us_install_support@omnis.net)

**Rest of the World:** [install\\_support@omnis.net](mailto:install_support@omnis.net)

## Serialization

When you first run Omnis Studio, you are prompted for your Name, Company name, and Serial number. The number is on the back of the CD case.

### Evaluation

If you are evaluating Omnis, you should leave the Name, Company name, and Serial number fields blank and click on OK. This creates an evaluation version of Omnis which gives you access to the full development environment, with only a few minor technical limitations.

# Contact Information

Please contact your local sales representative for details about our products and services using the following email addresses.

**US Sales:** [us\\_sales@omnis.net](mailto:us_sales@omnis.net)

**UK Sales:** [uk\\_sales@omnis.net](mailto:uk_sales@omnis.net)

**German Sales:** [ge\\_sales@omnis.net](mailto:ge_sales@omnis.net)

**Scandinavian Sales:** [scan\\_sales@omnis.net](mailto:scan_sales@omnis.net)

**Benelux Sales:** [benelux\\_sales@omnis.net](mailto:benelux_sales@omnis.net)

**Support Services:** see [www.omnis.net](http://www.omnis.net)