
Bs_InstantHelp:

make your objects editable

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WHO READS LONG MANUALS? YEAH... AND THAT'S WHY IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO PLACE THE RIGHT HELP TEXT INTO THE RIGHT SPOT. IT HELPS YOUR USERS, AND YOU'LL HAVE TO USE THE TERM RTFM LESS. HOPEFULLY.

This is a step-by-step guide to create an example instant help application on a webpage using the Bs_InstantHelp plugin.

InstantHelp offers an easy way to add help text aid to your site or web application. All the help texts won't be loaded and sent to the client along with the page. That would be a lot of traffic and work that's not necessary in 99.x% of the page loads.

The texts are loaded "on demand". A connection is made to the server to grab that specific help text only (using JSRS ¹).

What you need:

- An existing installation of PHP/MySQL/Apache (or IIS) and *BlueShoes*.
- A website running *BlueShoes*, with an existing MySQL database.
- Some knowledge of PHP, understanding of how to use existing classes. Some knowledge of how to use SQL/MySQL.
- Bs_InstantHelp uses JSRS, which has some browser (Javascript) requirements. If something does not work, check that.

Source Location:

Class: `plugins/instanthelp/Bs_Ih_InstantHelp.class.php`

Examples: `plugins/instanthelp/examples/example1.html`
`plugins/instanthelp/examples/example2.html`

We are going to build these examples. You may want to open them.

The db table with the help texts must be created, if it's not already there.

```
CREATE TABLE IF NOT EXISTS BsInstantHelp (
  ID          INT          NOT NULL DEFAULT 0 AUTO_INCREMENT,
  dict       VARCHAR(40)  NOT NULL DEFAULT '',
  strKey     CHAR(40)     NOT NULL DEFAULT '',
  lang       CHAR(5)      NOT NULL DEFAULT '',
  helpText   BLOB        NOT NULL DEFAULT '',
  PRIMARY KEY ID (ID),
  KEY dictStrKeyLang (dict, strKey, lang)
);
```

It will hold the help/information/whatever texts for all applications you need. Just use a unique combination of dict/strKey/lang to identify the records.

Now let's insert a few test records. Btw, you can use Bs_Debedoo² as GUI to edit this data.

```
INSERT INTO BsInstantHelp (dict, strKey, lang, helpText) VALUES ("IhExample",
"foo1", "en", "This is an example help text.");

INSERT INTO BsInstantHelp (dict, strKey, lang, helpText) VALUES ("IhExample",
"foo2", "en", "Another help text goes here.");
```

Example 1:

In your html head, add:

```
<script language="JavaScript"
src="/_bsJavascript/plugins/jsrs/JsrsCore.lib.js"></script>
<script language="JavaScript"
src="/_bsJavascript/core/lang/Bs_Misc.lib.js"></script>
<script language="JavaScript"
src="/_bsJavascript/plugins/instanthelp/Bs_InstantHelpClient.class.js"></script>

<script language="javascript">
function init() {
  ih = new Bs_InstantHelpClient();
  ih.language = 'en';
  ih.init('ih');
}
</script>
```

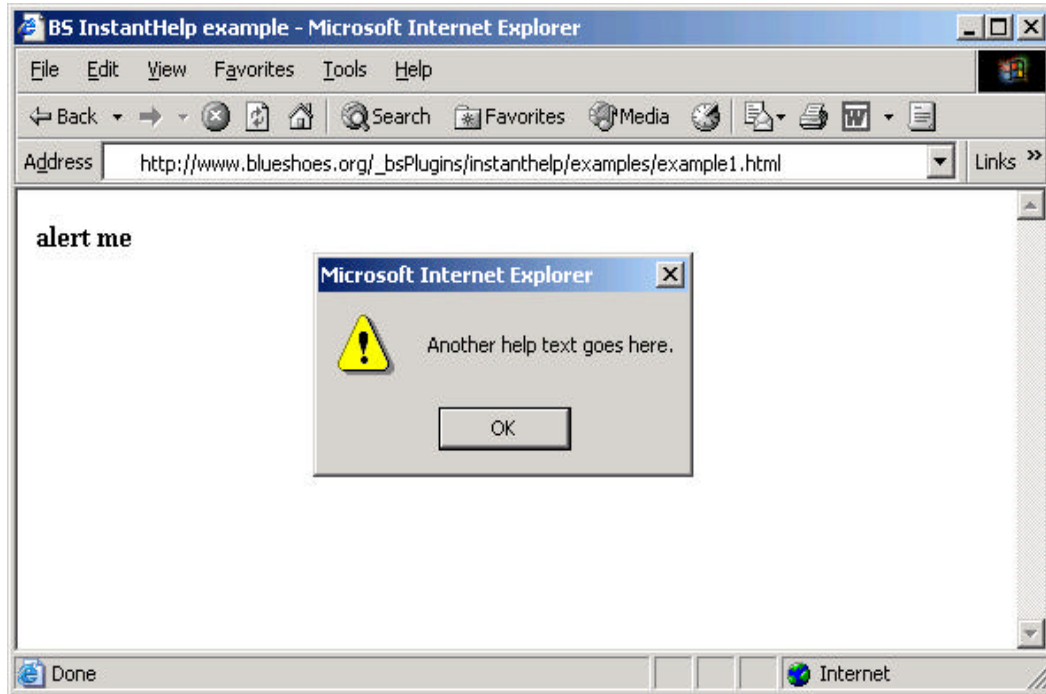
The body tag needs an onLoad event to the function above:

```
<body onLoad="init();">
```

And in the body we need this part:

```
<span onclick="ih.getText('IhExample', 'foo2', 'en', 'alert()');"
style="cursor:hand;"><b>alert me</b></span>
```

So when the page loads, the Javascript libs are included. Then an instance of Bs_InstantHelpClient gets created. And if one goes and clicks the alert me text in the page, a connection is made to the server using JSRS to grab the help text from the dictionary "IhExample" with the key "foo2". When that value returns from the server, it is automatically passed to the 'alert()' method and thus spitted out.



You can add this block to the body too. This one will add the help text into the "helpTextContainer" td tag.

```
<table>
  <tr>
    <td>here we have some <span onclick="ih.getText('IhExample', 'foo1', 'en', 'helpTextContainer');"
style="cursor:hand;"><b>help.</b></td>
    <td id="helpTextContainer"></td>
  </tr>
</table>
```

Params for getText():

- String dictName: The dictionary name, IhExample in our case.
- String strKey: The "name" of the help text, "foo1" in our case.
- String lang: The language, "en" in our case. We could have texts in different langs.
- String htmlElementId: The element id in the html code where the help text gets automatically assigned to. Alternatively it can be a function name that gets called. Example: "alert()"

Let's go on with a fancier example.

Example 2:

Insert these records:

```
INSERT INTO BsInstantHelp (dict, strKey, lang, helpText) VALUES ("IhExample",
"word", "en", "The spoken sign of a conception or an idea; an articulate or vocal
sound; a single component part of human speech or language; a term; a vocable.");

INSERT INTO BsInstantHelp (dict, strKey, lang, helpText) VALUES ("IhExample",
"dictionary", "en", "A book containing the words of a language, arranged
alphabetically, with explanations of their meanings; a lexicon; a vocabulary; a
wordbook.");

INSERT INTO BsInstantHelp (dict, strKey, lang, helpText) VALUES ("IhExample",
"bookshelf", "en", "A shelf to hold books.");
```

In your html head, add:

```
<script language="JavaScript" src="/_bsJavascript/plugins/jsrs/JrsCore.lib.js"></script>
<script language="JavaScript" src="/_bsJavascript/core/lang/Bs_Misc.lib.js"></script>
<script language="JavaScript"
src="/_bsJavascript/plugins/instanthelp/Bs_InstantHelpClient.class.js"></script>
<script language="JavaScript" src="/_bsJavascript/plugins/instanthelp/Bs_InstantToolTip.class.js"></script>

<script language="javascript">
function init() {
  ih = new Bs_InstantHelpClient();
  ih.language = 'en';
  ih.init('ih');
  itt = new Bs_InstantToolTip();
  itt.highlightMode = new Array();
  itt.highlightMode['raster'] = true;
  itt.highlightMode['border'] = true;
  itt.init('itt', ih);
}
</script>
```

The body tag needs an onLoad event to the function above:

```
<body onLoad="init();" >
```

And in the body we need this part:

```
in this text we have some <span onclick="itt.query(this, event);" dictName="IhExample" strKey="word"
lang="en">words</span> that need to be explained.<br>
do you have a <span onclick="itt.query(this, event);" dictName="IhExample" strKey="dictionary"
lang="en">dictionary</span> in your <span onclick="itt.query(this, event);" dictName="IhExample"
strKey="bookshelf" lang="en">bookshelf</span>?<br>
start the tool tip help: <span style="cursor:hand; cursor:pointer;" onclick="itt.start();" >?</span>
```

Some words have linked tool tips. The words are: “words”, “dictionary” and “bookshelf”. They are enclosed in `` tags (has to be a span tag, not div or something else). The span has some additional properties. The `onClick` event, the `dictName`, the `strKey` and the `lang`.

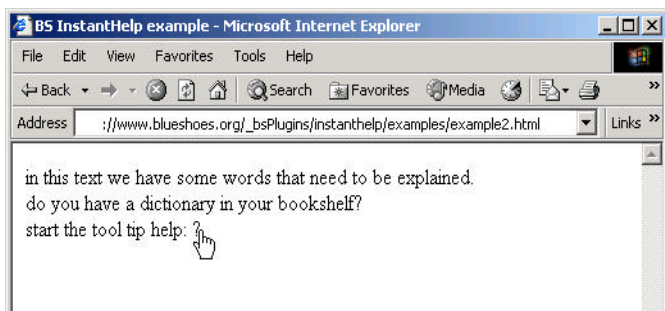
And then there’s the “tool tip starter”, in our case it’s the question mark “?” with the `onClick` event that fires `itt.start()`.

Then finally add this html code at the bottom of the page, right before the `</body>` tag:

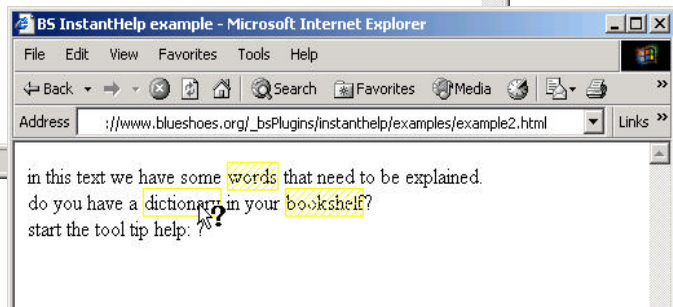
```
<div id="tthLayer"></div>
```

It will be used as container for the tool tip.

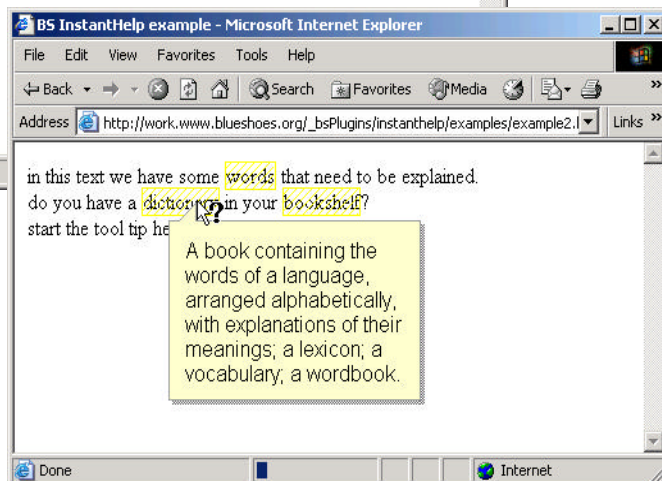
Note: in Internet Explorer this tag will be inserted using `insertAdjacentHTML()` if it's missing. In Mozilla this method is not available [yet], and thus it is needed that you insert the tag.



Click the question mark ? at the end of the text. I’m sure you’ll come up with a nice icon or so ☺



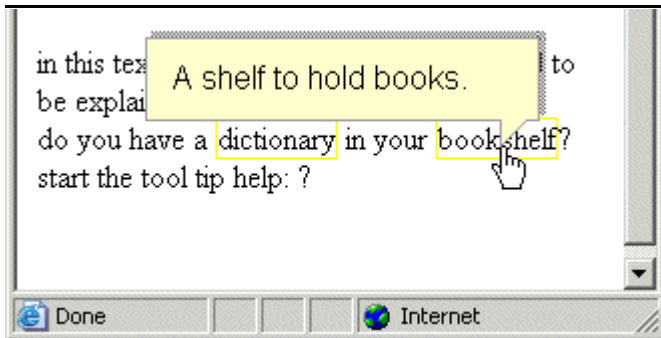
Now all words that have descriptions got a yellow border. There are different highlighting options. Another cursor icon may be cool too.



Click on one of the yellow words. The tool tip displays.

Just click somewhere in the page, and the tool tip & the yellow borders disappear.

The ToolTip renders to where there is enough space (up/down, left/right):



References

- 1 JSRS, see <http://www.blueshoes.org/en/javascript/jsrs/>
- 2 Bs_Debedoo, see <http://www.blueshoes.org/en/applications/debedoo/>