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Context Sensitivity in Browser Based AIR Help

By Willam van Weelden on 4th August 2017

Context sensitive help is help set up to open at a topic relevant to the field or screen that the user is viewing. This article provides an overview of the way context sensitivity works in browser based AIR help generated by RoboHelp. This article shows you how you can create URLs to call your help context sensitive. This allows you to create your own context sensitive help calls and allows you to create your own API. I focus on developers and others who want to know what options are available to them. I assume you have some experience with RoboHelp and browser based AIR help as I will be using default RoboHelp terminology.

Note:

- Not all methods may work on RoboHelp 8.
- This article is only about Browser based AIR help. If you are looking for more information on locally installed AIR Help, see <http://www.grainge.org/pages/authoring/air/air.htm>.
- If you have opened a browser based AIR help project in your browser and you feed a context

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sensitive URL into the address bar, the call may fail. There are two solutions to this:

- First navigate to another URL such as <http://www.google.com> and then try the URL again.
- Amend the call to avoid conflict. See the table at the start of http://www.grainge.org/pages/authoring/calling_webhelp_using_urls.html for more information.

Calling Browser based AIR help

You call the help context sensitive through the start file of the project. You add the options you want to use to the URL to control how the help opens your topic. Browser based AIR help supports the following options:

- Map numbers.
- Topic ids.
- Relative path to a file in the project.

Say that we have a fictitious context sensitive browser based AIR help project published on <http://localhost/newproject.htm>. The file `newproject.htm` is the start file of the project. You can call the help in two ways:

- Specify the path to the topic.
- Using options to make the help open the correct topic.

Specify the path to the topic

When you specify the path to the topic, simply add

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after the URL and add the relative path to the topic you want to open:

```
http://localhost
/newproject.htm#folder/mytopic.htm
```

The help will now open the specified topic. The help will open in the same browser window, no popup is used. After the URL you can use several options to control how the help works. You have to separate multiple options with `>>`. You can use the following options:

| Option | Expected Value | Description |
|--------|----------------|---|
| cap | String | The title of the help project. |
| pan | 0 or 1 | Show the skin or show only the topic. <code>0</code> to show the skin and <code>1</code> to show only the topic. The topic is shown with a small border in the same colour as the skin. Only works on RoboHelp 8. |

For instance, if you want the help to show the skinOnly works on RoboHelp 8! and you want to title of the help to “My help project”, use the following URL:

```
http://localhost/newproject.htm#folder/mytopic.htm>>pan=0>>cap=My
help project
```

Using options to make the help open the correct topic

If you want to use options to make the help open the

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correct topic, you can use all the options that browser based AIR help provides. To trigger the context sensitivity, add `#<` after the path of the project start file:

```
http://localhost/newproject.html#<
```

After these characters, you can specify the options. You have to separate multiple options with `>>`. You can use the following options:

| OPTION | EXPECTED VALUE | DESCRIPTION |
|--------|----------------|--|
| cmd | String | Decide which pane you want to show on opening. If you use this, you can't use map numbers or topic ids. Available values: <code>idx</code> for index, <code>fts</code> for search and <code>toc</code> for glossary. |
| helpid | DUCC name | The name of the content category you want to open. This must exactly the same as the name defined in the AIR SSL dialog. |
| id | Map number | Call using a map number. If you specify both a map number and a topic id, the help shows the topic corresponding with what is listed first in the URL. |
| str | Topic id | Call using a topic id. The topic id is case sensitive. If you |

| | | |
|-----|-------------|---|
| | | specify both a map number and a topic id, the help shows the topic corresponding with what is listed first in the URL. |
| wnd | Window name | The name of the window you want to use. The window name is case sensitive. You need to create the window in the RoboHelp project. |

For example, if you want to call the topic with map number 3, use the following URL:

```
http://localhost/newproject.htm#<id=3
```

Another example: if you want to call the topic with topic id MyTopic and use the window MyWindow, use the following URL:

```
http://localhost/newproject.htm#<str=MyTopic>>wnd=MyWindow
```

The help will always open a popup when you use any of these options. Since most of the context sensitivity is handled through a flash file, there is no way of changing this behaviour. If you don't want a popup, don't use these options.

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