SimTools

COMPANY TOOLS MANUAL

Contents

Welcome to the Company Tools Manual

The SimTools Company Tools can be used to produce a customized version of SimTools enabling simple end user setup and use.

Company Tools can produce a version of SimTools that can be an **Open System** like it is with a normal insulation. Game Engine will be unlocked in this version. It can also produce an **End User** version of SimTools where the end user only needs to Patch a game and Play. Game Engine will be completely locked in this version to prevent users from changing preset configurations.

Company Tools can customize a build of SimTools in the following ways:

- Select the included game plugins
- Select the included game profiles
- Select the included axis assignment plugins
- Select the included axis assignment presets
- Select the included interface plugins
- Select the included interface presets
- Add the current axis assignments to the installer
- Add the current interface setting to the installer
- Add Game Engine Locked Screen to put SimTools in "End User" mode
- Edit/change the Game Mangers splash screen
- Update clients to the current version of SimTools
- Install the single click SimTools Launcher
- Customize the installer to have a custom splash screen
- Customize the installer to have a custom info screen, which is a splash screen with an OK button
- Run any single "Driver.exe" application to install a driver
- Run any "After Install.exe" application to correct COM port, etc...
- Create custom game plugins that will have the correct axis assignments settings for your simulator
- Create custom game packs for your clients with multiple custom game plugins to be installed at once with a single zip file

How to build custom SimTools installations with Company Tools

The SimTools Company Tools creates a build from an existing SimTools installation. You need to install and configure SimTools on a computer for your simulator before you can create a custom build. (Note: This document assumes you know how to configure SimTools for your simulators.)

Step #1 – Install and configure SimTools for your simulator. We strongly suggest dedicating a computer as a "Custom Build" computer. This computer will be used to create the Custom Builds for SimTools.

1) Install the latest version of SimTools on the computer. If SimTools was previously installed, remove it and start fresh.

2) Launch Game Engine and setup the Interfaces for your simulator.

3) Setup the "Default" and the "Live for Speed" Axis Assignment Settings in Game Engine.

4) Use the Output Testing area of Game Engine to confirm the simulator is working as expected.

5) Now is a good time to setup Axis Limiting if you want to include it. (Note – Axis Limiting is a value representing the amount of the axis you will use. Setting it to 90% will result in the axis not using 10% of the available travel distance.)

You should now have the basic setup complete.

Step #2 – Add a game plugin to SimTools. This step will help you learn how to add game plugins to a build. Only add one extra game plugin for now. They are simple to add later after you understand how everything works.

1) Close Game Engine and launch the SimTools **Plugin Updater** to install the extra game plugin. Any game plugin will work. Close the Plugin Updater when finished.

2) Now re-launch Game Engine and adjust the Axis Assignment settings in Game Engine for the newly added game plugin. (Note: Newly added game plugins automatically receive a copy of the "Default" Axis Assignment settings as a starting point.)

Step #3 – Fine-tune your simulator to games. Make sure Game Manager, Game Engine and the game are started so you can ride the simulator. During this testing stage you should be concentrating on producing the best ride possible for your users.

This is achieved by tuning the Max/Min values of the game in the **Tuning Center** of Game Engine. There are many different simulators available, so taking a few minutes to understand and play with the Max/Min settings is well worth the effort. It can lead to a fantastic ride!

Once you are happy with your settings, consider adding presets and profiles.

1) In Game Manger's Profile Editor you can create profiles that have fine-tuned settings for slower or faster vehicles. (Consider making one for this tutorial as you can always remove it later.)

2) In Game Engine's Axis Assignments you can make a preset for easy setup.

3) In Game Engine's Interface Settings you can make a preset for easy setup. (**WARNING:** Do not add anything to this preset that could change. For example, a COM port might change on their system.)

We are now finished setting up the desired configurations and it is time to move on to the SimTools Company Tools!

SimTools Company Tools (Setup and Usage)

Unzip the SimTools Company Tools to a folder on your Desktop. You can unzip it anywhere the app has write permissions, so a folder on an external hard drive is fine too.

Double-Click "SimTools CompanyTools.exe" in the folder you created. It will create a Builds folder, Data folder, Settings folder and a Saved_Settings.cfg file. The Builds folder is where the custom installer will be created. The other folders contain default folders and files it needs to run.

You will be presented with the following screen:
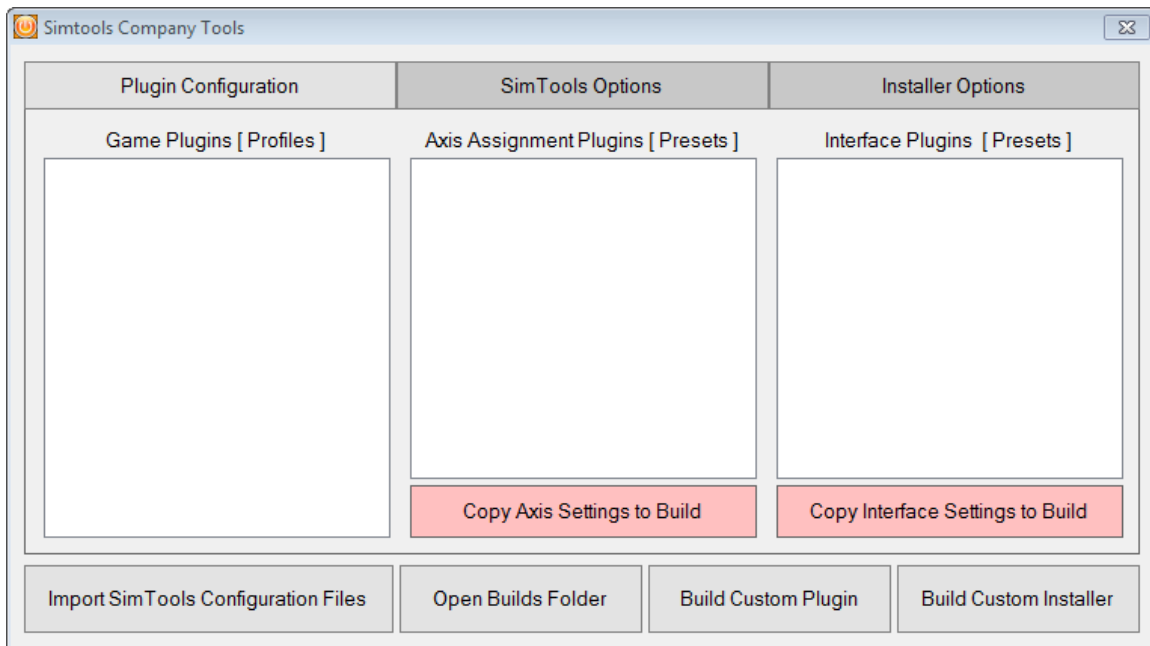
Let's get started!

Import SimTools Configuration Files

REQUIRED: Import SimTools Configuration Files – Click "Import SimTools Configuration Files". This makes a local copy of the current configuration of SimTools on the computer you are running this on. Then, it loads the output into the corresponding windows. (**WARNING:** You will not be able to build a custom installer if you do not complete this step.)
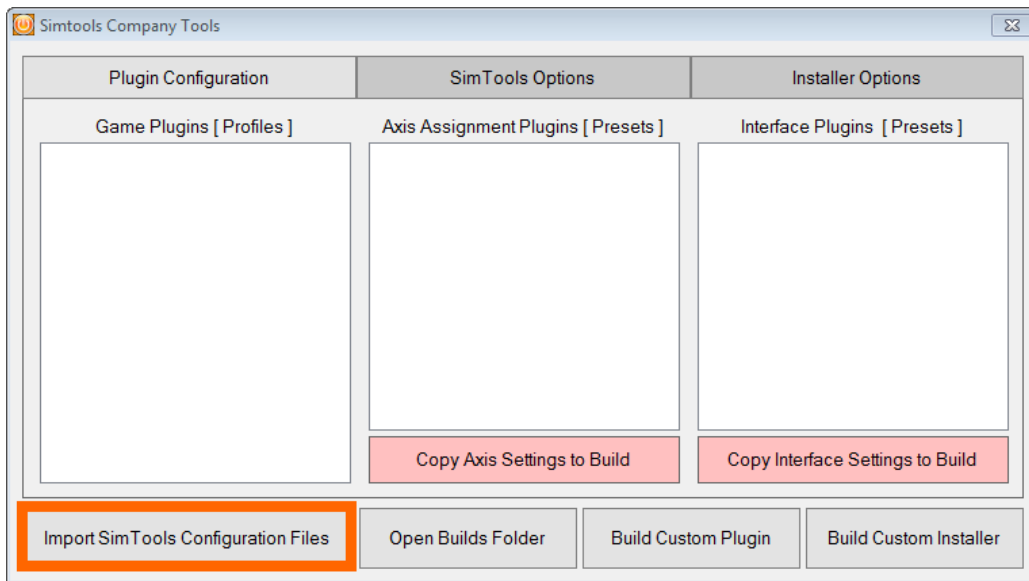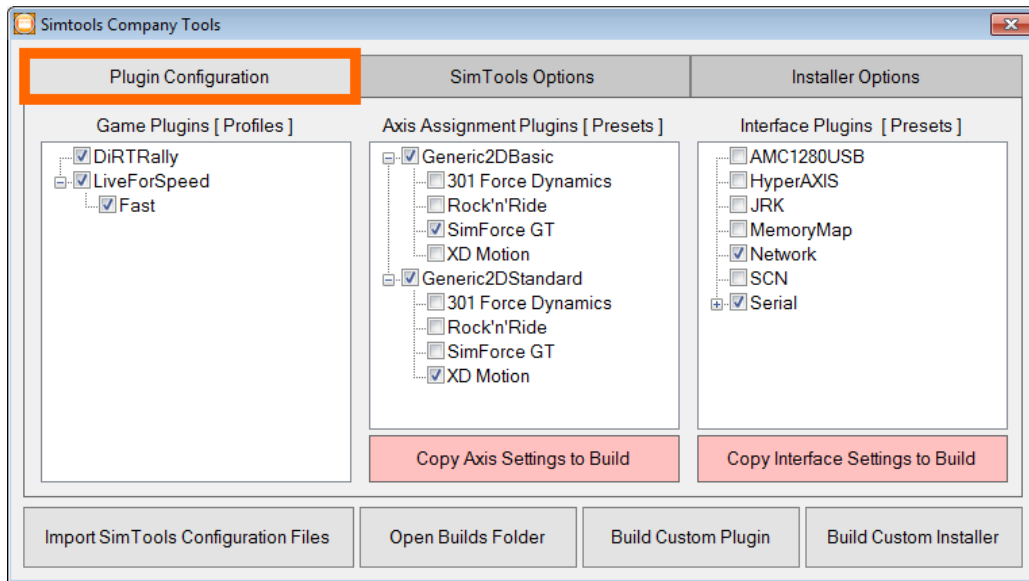

Note: The image below will look different depending on your setup. The idea is still the same though.
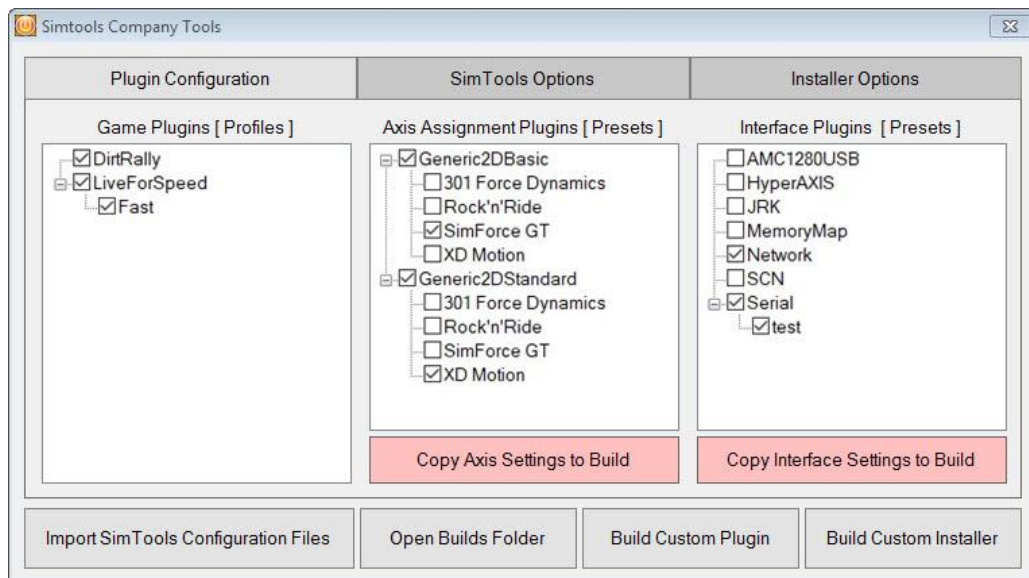
Plugin Configuration

Plugin Configuration – Company Tools opens to the Plugin Configuration tab by default when you launch the program. You can also click the "Plugin Configuration" tab at the top of the page.

Game Plugins – Select the game plugins you want installed with your installer. Game Plugins lists the available presets for each game plugin available. Notice how Game Manger's available game profiles are under the game plugins that have them. (LiveForSpeed has a Fast profile.)
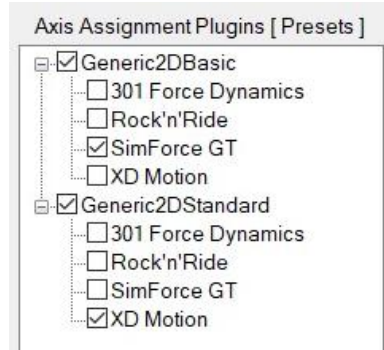
Select the profiles you want to be installed for each game plugin.
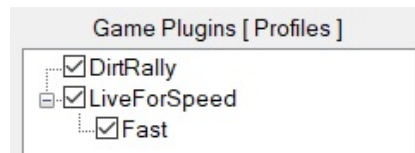
Axis Assignment Plugins – Select the axis assignment plugins you want to have installed with your installer. (**WARNING:** Do not remove axis assignment plugins required for your working setup.) Axis Assignment Plugins lists the available presets for each axis assignment plugin available. (Generic2DBasic and Generic2DStandard both have four presets.)

Select the presets you want to be installed for each axis assignment plugin.

Interface Plugins – Select the interface plugins you wish to have installed with your installer. (**WARNING:** Do not remove interface plugins required for your working setup.) Interface Plugins lists the available presets for each interface plugin available. (Serial has a test preset.)

Select the presets you want to be installed for each interface plugin.
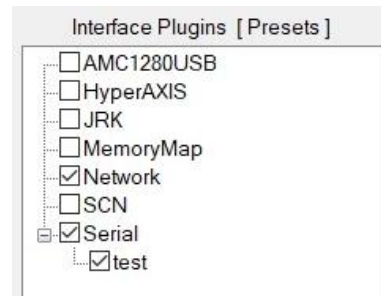
Copy Axis Settings to Build – Click "Copy Axis Settings to Build" to add the current axis settings to your installer.
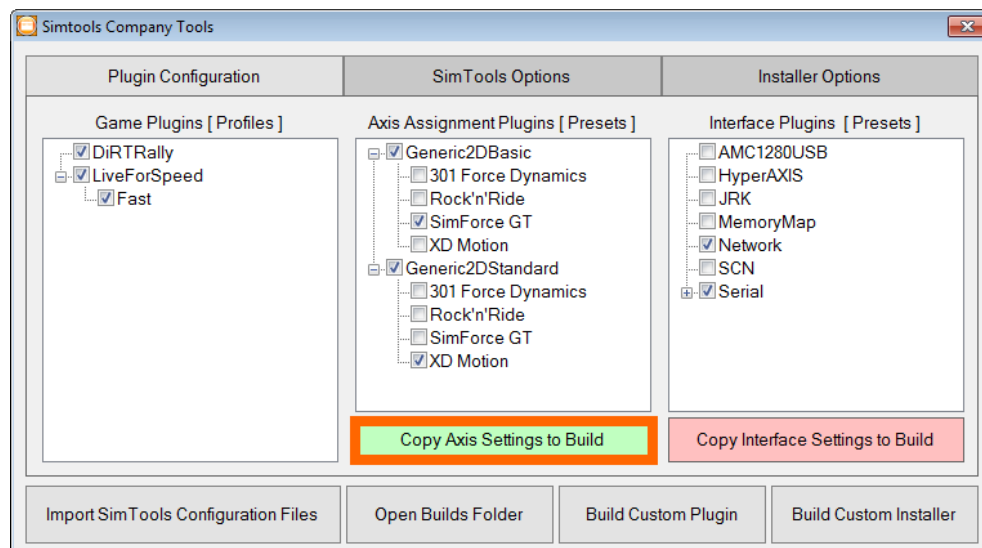
Copy Interface Settings to Build – Click "Copy Interface Settings to Build" to add the current interface settings to your installer. (**WARNING:** If your interface settings use something that could change when installed on the users computer like a COM port, this will need to be corrected later in the installation. We would fix these types of problems with an "After Install" app. More on this later…)
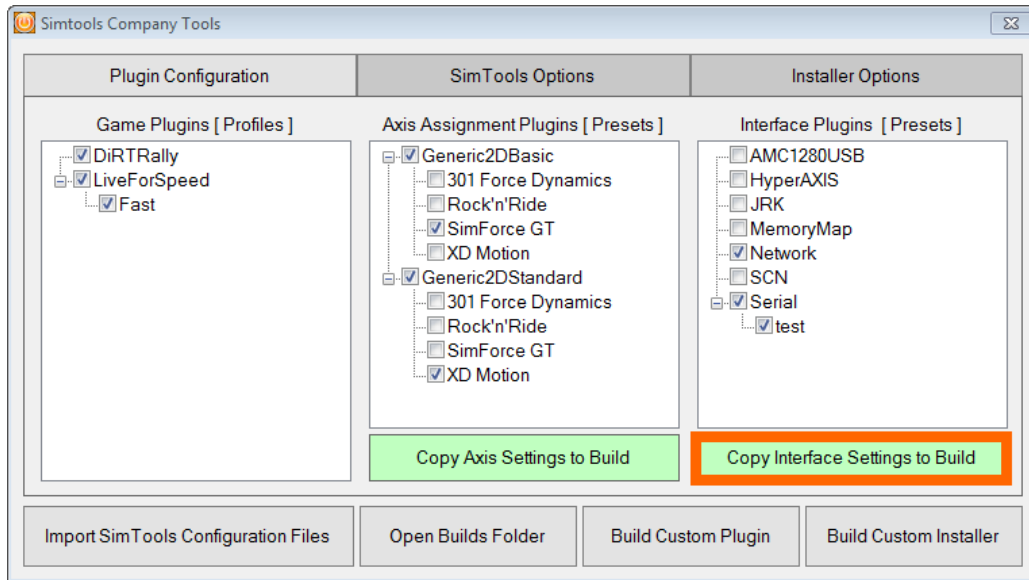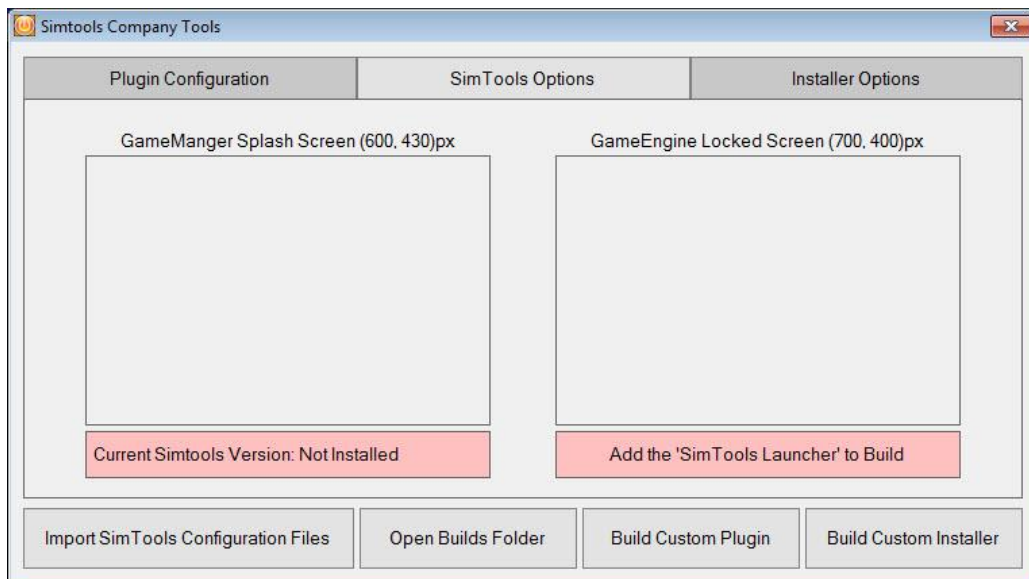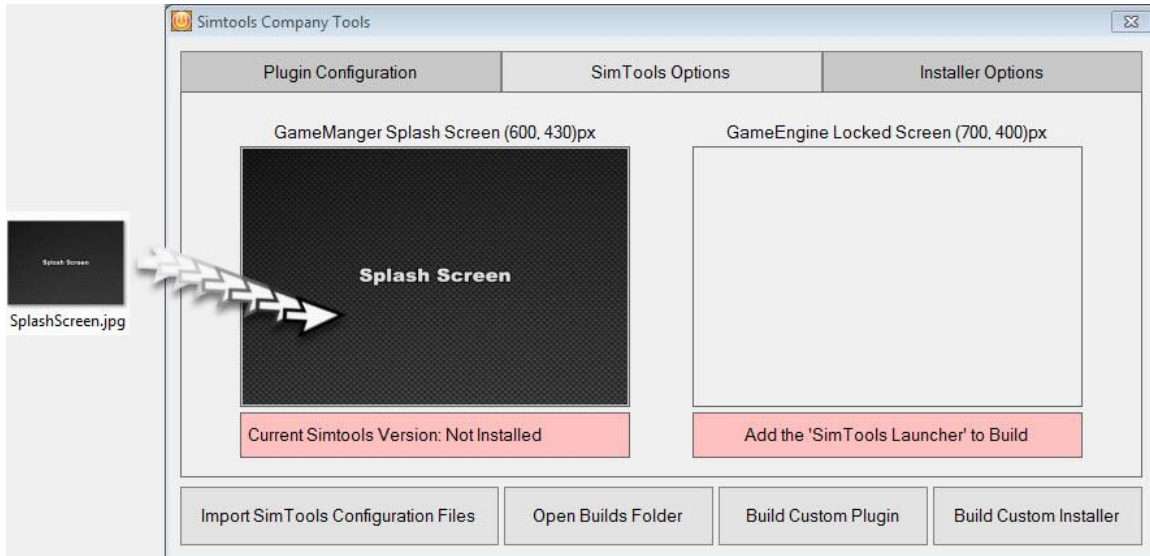
SimTools Options

SimTools Options – Click the "SimTools Options" tab at the top of the page.
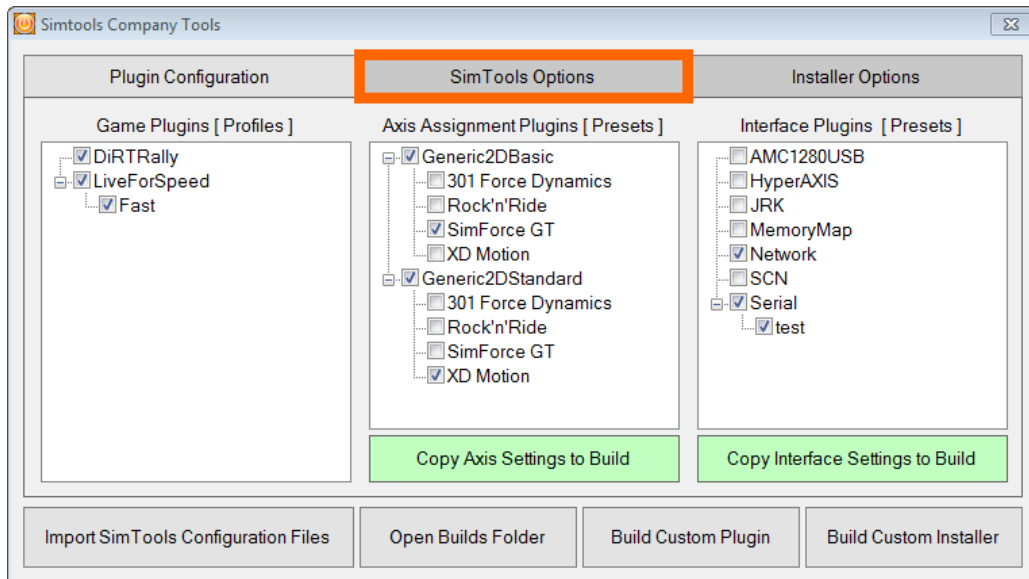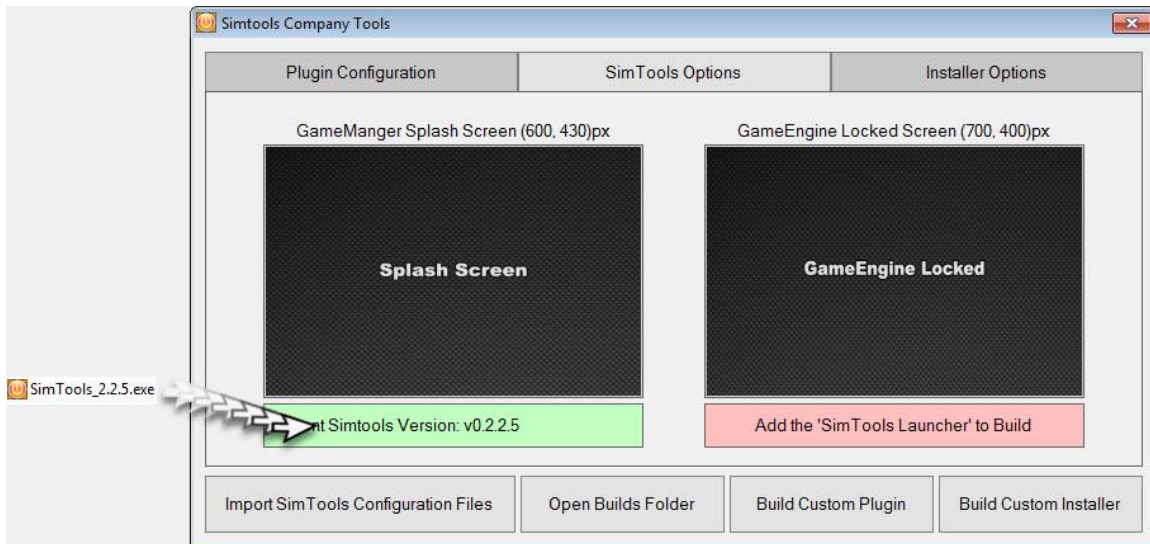

You will see a screen like this:

Game Manager Splash Screen – You can add a custom splash screen ".jpg" to Game Manger if you want. Create a ".jpg" picture and drag and drop it into the "Game Manager Splash Screen" window. (Note: Double click an image you want to remove. Use a pixel size of 600x430 for best results.)


Game Engine Locked Screen – You can lock Game Engine to enable "End User Mode" for SimTools. This option completely locks Game Engine, so the end user does not have access to change Game Engine configurations. Create a ".jpg" picture and drag and drop it onto the "Game Engine Locked Screen" window. (Use a pixel size of 700x400 for best results.)
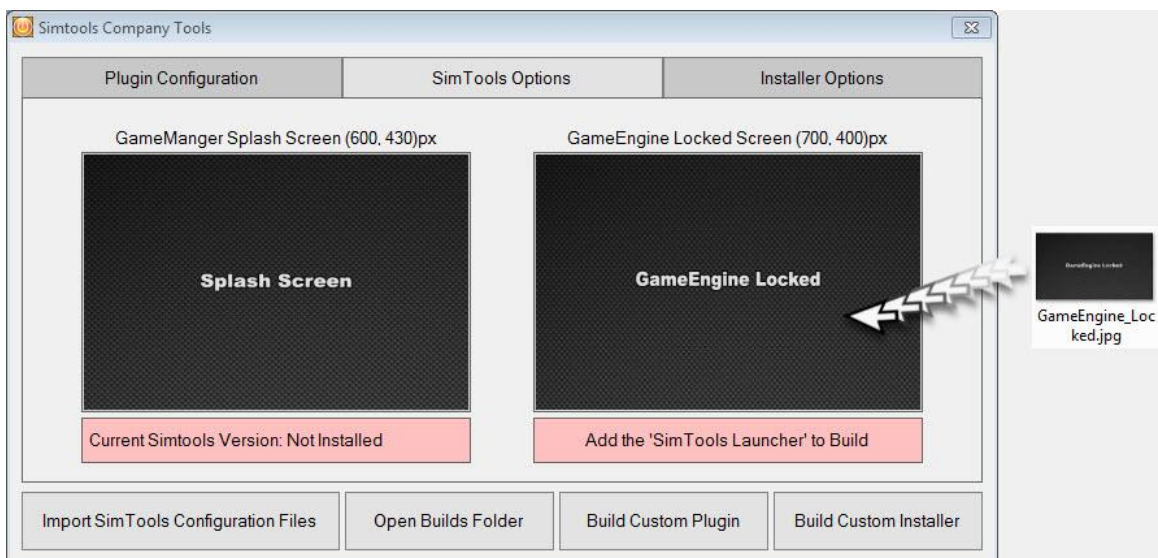
REQUIRED: Current SimTools Version – Add SimTools to the build. Drag and drop the current version of SimTools into the label "Current SimTools Version" as seen in the picture below. The label will be red until a SimTools version is added to the build. (Note: Double click on ".exe" files you want to remove. A SimTools version must be added to the Installer for you to build your installer. **WARNING:** You will not be able to build a custom installer if you do not complete this step.)
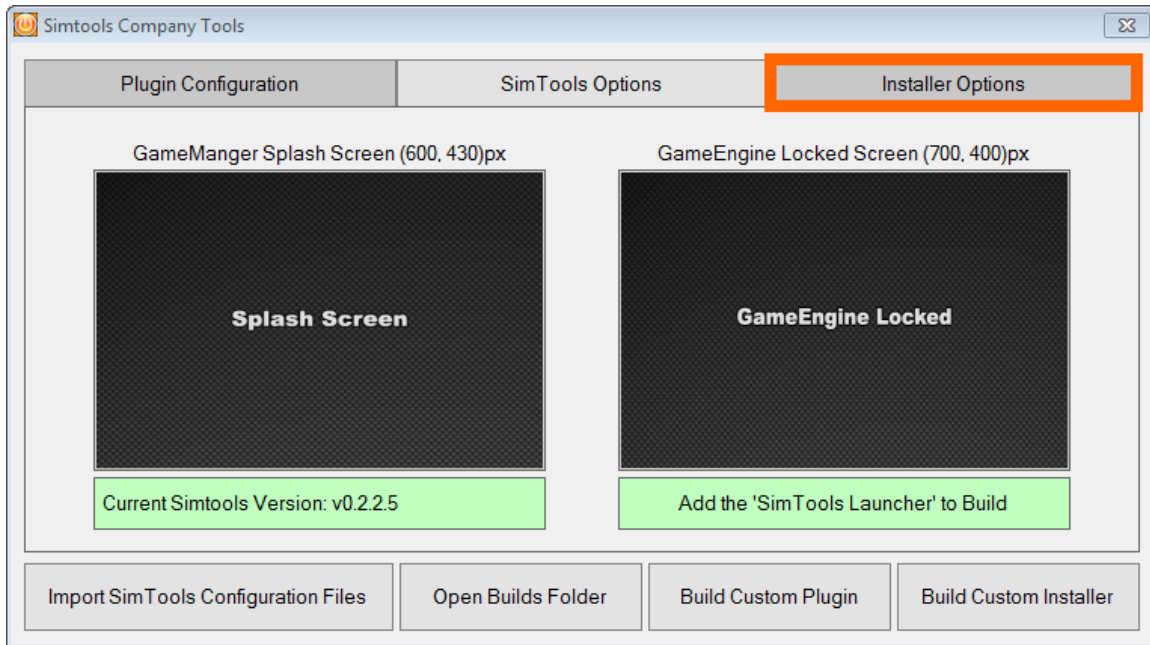

Add the SimTools Launcher to Build – Click "Add the SimTools Launcher to Build" if you want to add the launcher to the users computer. We recommend adding the SimTools Luncher to your build, because it adds a "one click" startup icon on the users desktop.
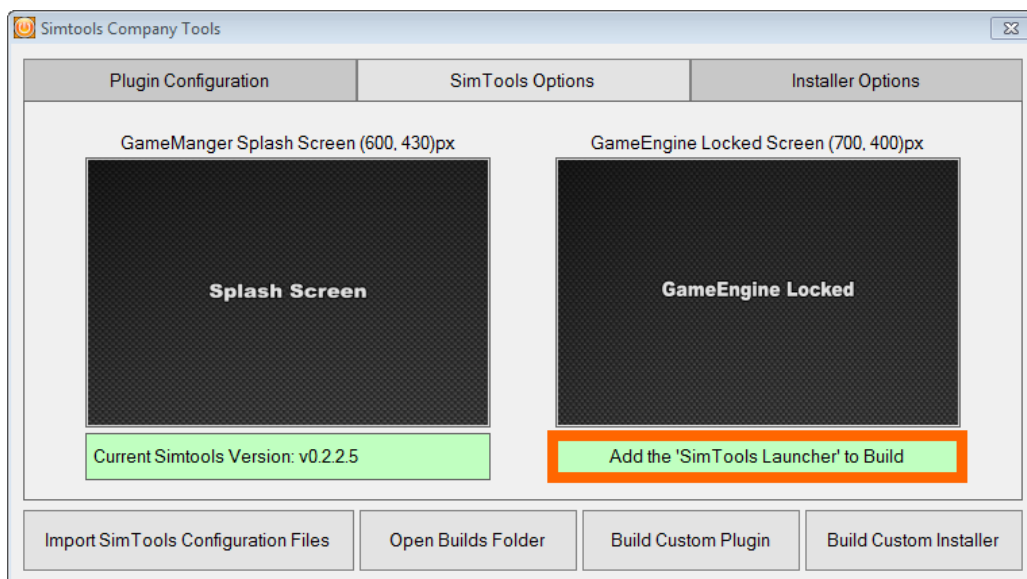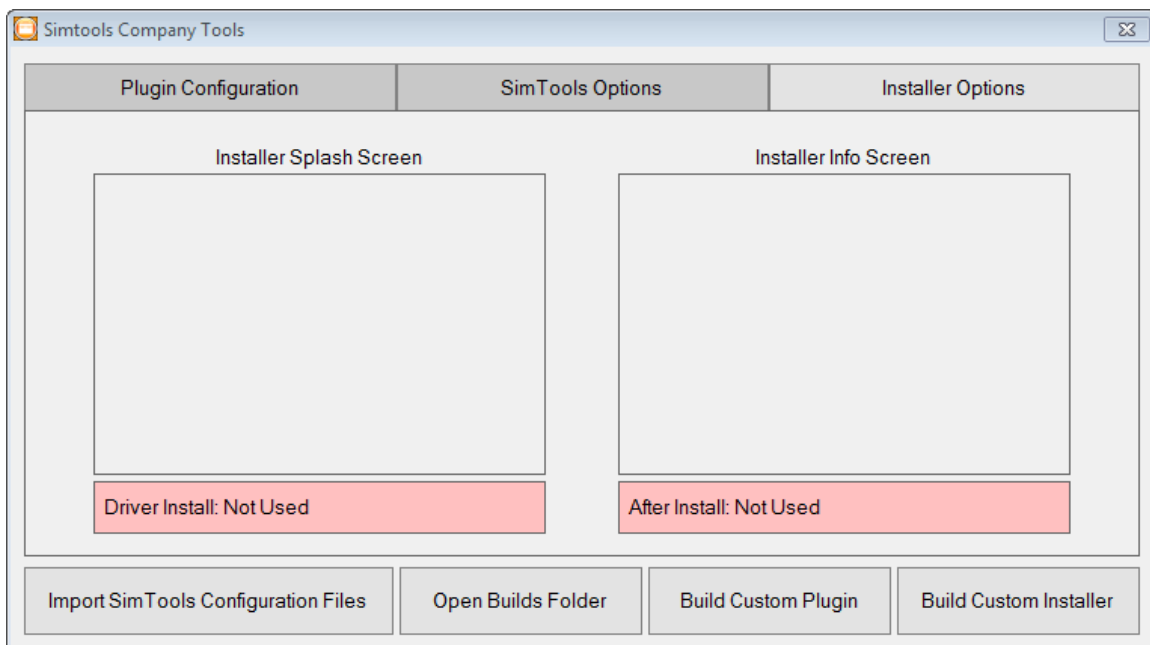
Installer Options

Installer Options – Click the "Installer Options" tab at the top of the page.
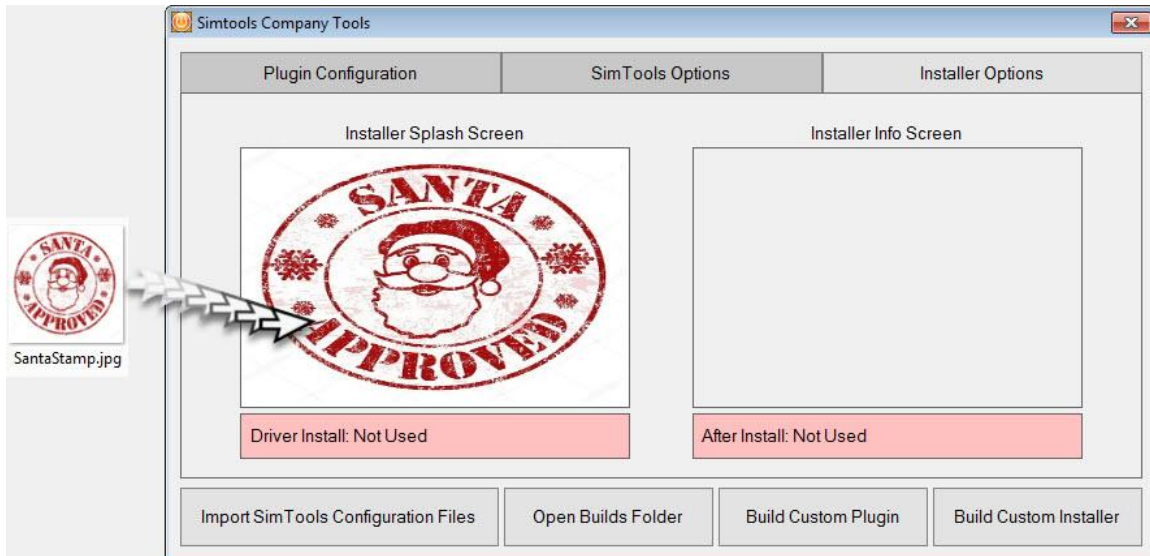

You will see a screen like this:

Installer Splash Screen – Add a custom installer splash screen ".jpg" if you want. Create a ".jpg" picture and drag and drop it into the "Installer Splash Screen" window. (Note – Double click an image you want to remove. Use a pixel size of 1024x768 or smaller for best results. The splash screen shows for 2.5 seconds.)

Installer Info Screen – Add a custom installer info screen ".jpg" if you want. Create a ".jpg" picture and drag and drop it into the "Installer Info Screen" window. (Use a pixel size of 1024x768 or smaller for best results. The splash screen will show until the user clicks the auto-generated "Continue" button. **WARNING:** If the image is too big, the "Continue" button will not show on the screen and you will need to press "Enter" on the keyboard to continue.)
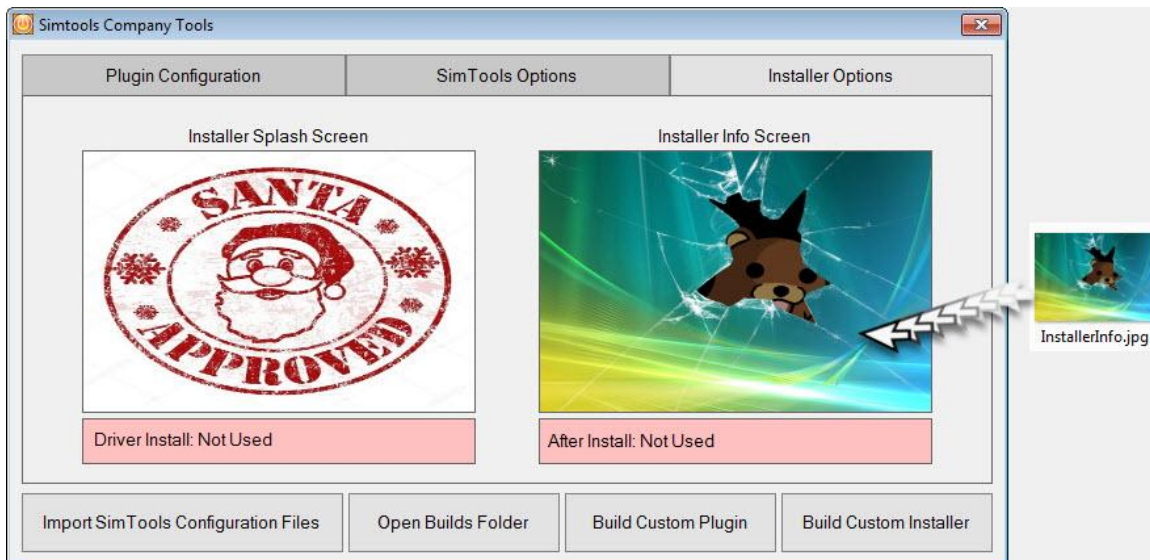
Driver Install – Add a "Driver Install" custom application. Drag and drop any ".exe" file into the label "Driver Install" as seen in the picture below. This file will be added to the Custom SimTools Installer you produce with Company Tools. During installation the setup file will call this ".exe" file and wait for it to finish before it proceeds.

If your driver is a single ".exe" file, then it will work great with Company Tools. If your driver package uses multiple files for the driver to install, then you will need to build your driver package into a single ".exe" file to use with Company Tools. The ".exe" you need to build will basically need to extract a folder (with all the files needed for the driver to be installed) into the windows temp directory and run the setup from there. (Note: The Driver Install only runs when SimTools is not installed on the computer.)


After Install – Add an "After Install" custom application. Drag and drop any ".exe" file into the label "After Install" as seen in the picture below. (Note: After Install is required if you are producing a locked installation of SimTools, but it is optional for an unlocked version)

The After Install is used for anything that needs to be completed or corrected during the initial setup on the end users computer. In most cases this will be the settings for the hardware interface. Specifically, what COM port is used to connect to their hardware interface.

The After Install works just like the Driver Install above. You can attach a single ".exe" file that will be added to the Custom SimTools Installer you produce with Company. During installation the setup file will call this ".exe" file and wait for it to finish before it proceeds. (Note: After Install is required if you are producing a locked installation of SimTools, but it is optional for an unlocked version)
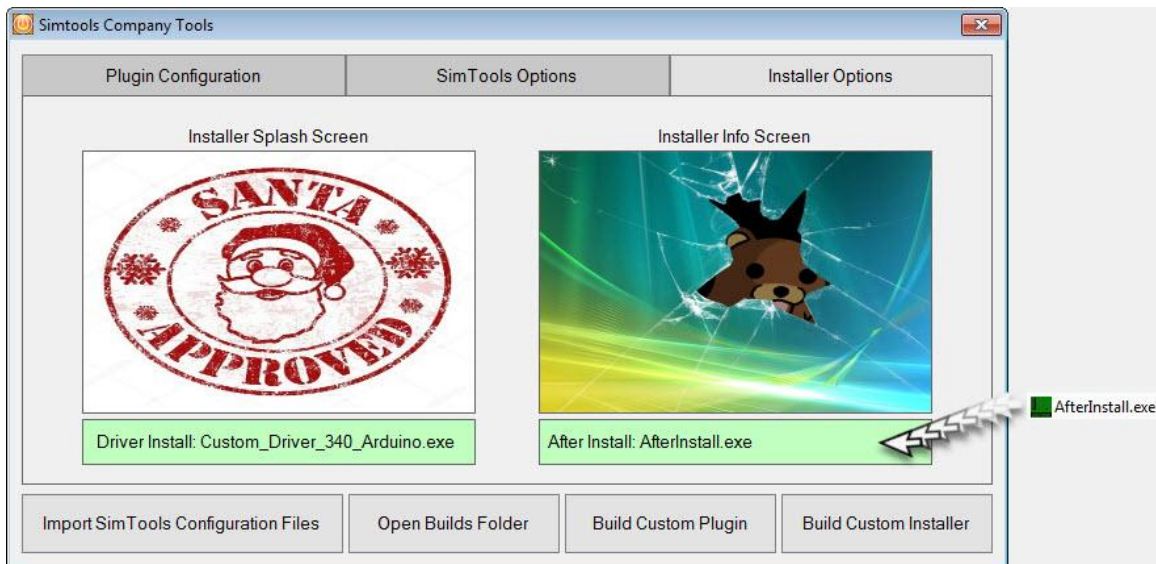

Build Custom Installer – Click "Build Custom Installer" to produce your new custom SimTools installation. (**WARNING:** You must Import SimTools Configuration Files and attach a Current SimTools Version to Company Tools to build a custom installer.)
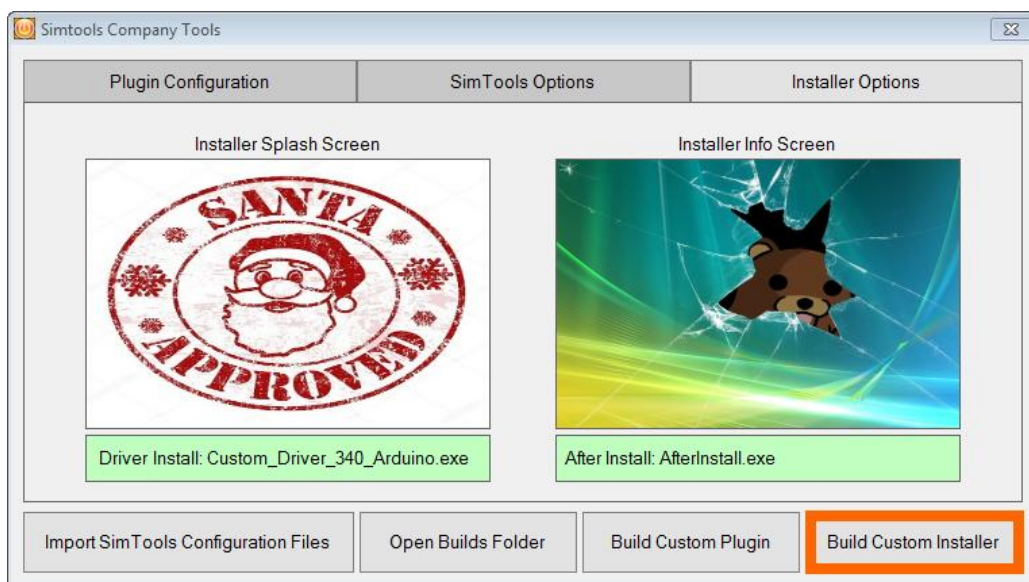

The Builds folder should display on your screen with your new custom SimTools installation in it.

You can open your Builds folder at any time by clicking the "Open Builds Folder" button.
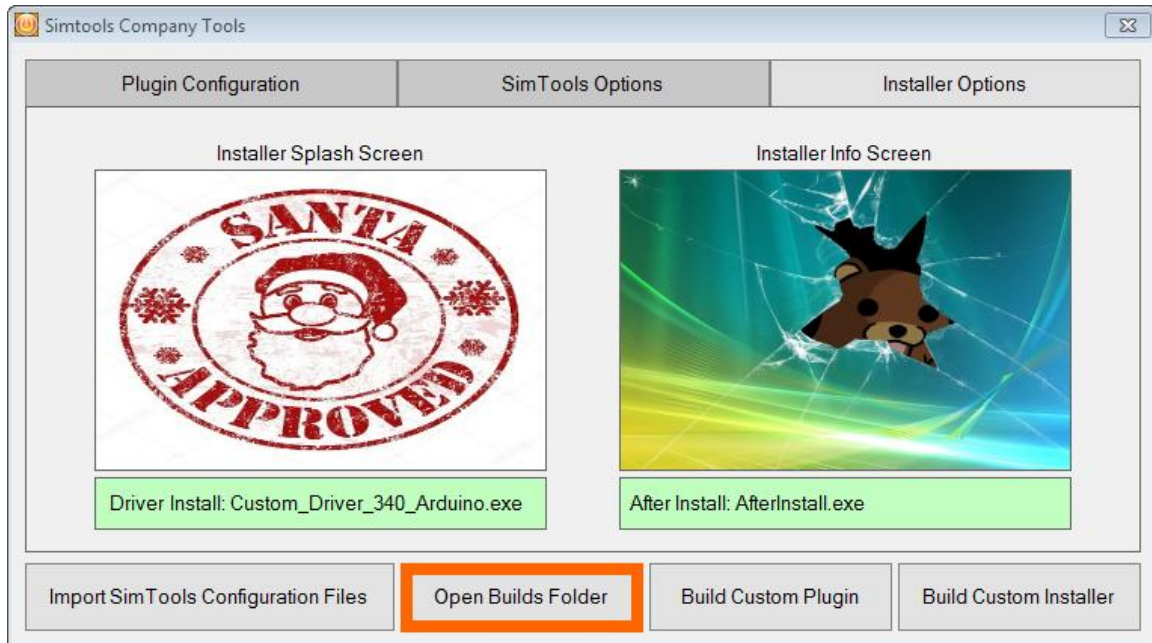
Build Custom Plugins

Build Custom Plugin – Company Tools has the ability to produce custom plugins that include the axis assignment setup files for you simulator. The user will only need to install the plugin, patch the game and play.
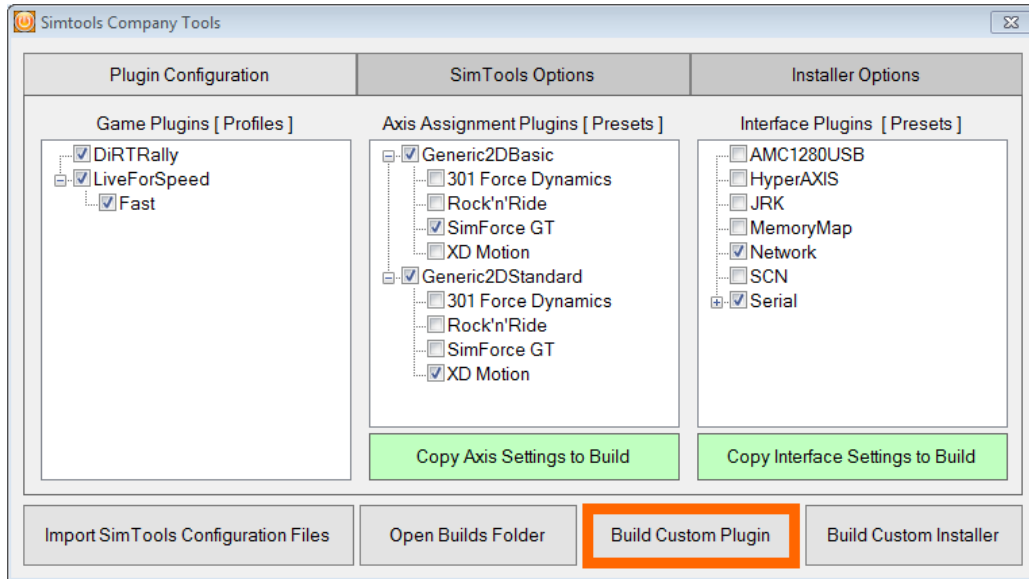
Select the games from the **Game Plugins** window that you want to produce a plugin for. If you select more than one game, you will have the option to produce individual game plugins for each game, or a single game pack that can be installed all at once. (Note: You must be on the **Plugin Configuration** tab to see the options below.)
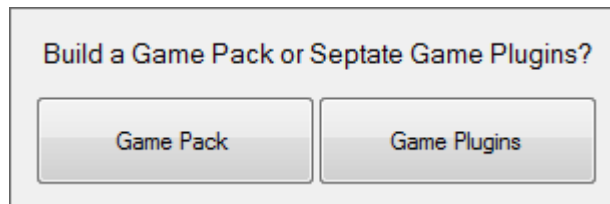
Closing Comments

You can clear Company Tools by deleting the Builds folder, Data folder, Settings folder and the Saved_Settings.cfg file before running SimTools CompanyTools.exe. That is it!

You can contact us at https://simtools.us/contact-us/ if you have any questions.

Congratulations! You completed the Company Tools Manual!