

Part 6: Automate your Builds

This tutorial is the last in our beginners tutorial section. It assumes you have read and completed the following tutorials:

- Part 1: Create your First Project
- Part 2: Create your First Configuration
- Part 3: Create your First Repository
- Part 4: Create your First Action
- Part 5: Using Builds

In our previous tutorials we setup our build environment which retrieves the latest source code, compiles the code and moves it to our ContinuaTutorial folder. The only problem is that we still need to manually start a build, which is where build triggers come into play.

Triggers

Triggers allow you to automate how configurations are built and when they are built. In Continua, there are several types of triggers:

- Repository Triggers: These triggers will begin a new build any time a source change is detected in a repository.
- Time-base Triggers: These triggers execute at a specific time.
- Build Completed Triggers: These will fire off a build when another build has finished. This trigger allows you to daisy-chain builds.

In this tutorial we will create a repository trigger that will execute a build whenever the source code changes in our GitHub Fluent NHibernate repository. So lets head back into our **Configuration Wizard** and navigate to the **Triggers section**.

The screenshot shows the Continua Configuration Wizard interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the project name 'My First Project' and a user profile 'Dave McConnell'. Below this is a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > My First Project > Administration > Configuration Wizard > Triggers'. A blue header bar reads 'Configuration Wizard : My First Configuration'. Below the header is a progress indicator with steps 1 through 9: '1 Details > 2 Repositories > 3 Variables > 4 Stages > 5 Triggers > 6 Conditions > 7 Security > 8 Reports > 9 Cleanup'. The main content area contains a text block explaining triggers and a list of three types: Time based triggers, Repository triggers, and Build Completed triggers. Below this is a table with columns 'Trigger Type', 'Name', 'Description', 'Enabled', and 'Last Executed'. The table is currently empty, with the text 'No triggers were found.' displayed below it. At the bottom of the wizard, there are three buttons: 'Back', 'Exit Wizard', and 'Continue'.

Triggers allow you to start a build based on a particular event. There are three types of triggers:

- Time based triggers: These will trigger a build at a certain date or time.
- Repository triggers: These monitor your Version Control Systems and will automatically trigger a build when a change is detected.
- Build Completed triggers: These allow you to daisy chain builds and start a build once another build has completed.

For more information, visit the [triggers wiki page](#).

Trigger Type	Name	Description	Enabled	Last Executed
No triggers were found.				

[Back](#) [Exit Wizard](#) [Continue](#)

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Once you arrive at the Triggers page, you will notice that we do not have any Triggers associated with this configuration yet. So lets add a trigger by clicking the **Create** link which will bring up the Trigger dialog.

New Trigger

Name:

Build Priority: ▼
This determines the order to run builds when there are more builds queued than available agents.

Enabled:

Force Repository Check:
Check for changes in all repositories associated with this configuration every time a build is started by this trigger.

Type: ▼

Variables: ▼ +

✓ Save | ✕ Cancel | ? Help

Similarly to the repository dialog, the options you can set for this trigger will change depending on the **Repository Type** that is set. Lets go ahead and set this trigger to be a **Repository trigger**.

For this tutorial, the default settings are all we need to automate our builds. You should note that the **Repository** property should point to our repository **Fluent_NHibernate** and that this property auto populates with all the repositories that this configuration can access. So make sure **Repository** is pointing to our **Fluent_NHibernate** repository and that this trigger **is enabled** and save our new trigger.

New Trigger

Name	<input style="width: 90%;" type="text" value="Fluent NHibernate Trigger"/>	
Build Priority	<input style="width: 80%;" type="text" value="Normal"/>	▼
	This determines the order to run builds when there are more builds queued than available agents.	
Enabled	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Force Repository Check	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Check for changes in all repositories associated with this configuration every time a build is started by this trigger.	
Type	<input style="width: 80%;" type="text" value="Repository"/>	▼
Repository	<input style="width: 80%;" type="text" value="Fluent_Nhibernate"/>	▼
Quiet Period (min)	<input style="width: 80%;" type="text" value="5"/>	
	Length of time that a build will wait on the queue before starting.	
Associate changesets	<input style="width: 80%;" type="text" value="Latest"/>	▼
	Associate the latest changeset from the triggering repository or all changesets from all repositories that were committed after the last successful build.	
Trigger from	<input style="width: 80%;" type="text" value="All branches"/>	▼
	<input type="checkbox"/> Only notify users who caused the build	
Variables:	<input style="width: 80%;" type="text"/>	▼ <input type="button" value="⊕"/>

Once your trigger has been created it will appear in the Triggers list which means that Continuum will be constantly checking the Fluent NHibernate GitHub project for any code changes! However, as this is a GitHub project and we cannot easily change the source of the project, lets also create a daily trigger that will build our project at the same time every day. This will allow us to see automated builds in action. So lets create another trigger but this time around lets set the repository type to **Daily**. When creating this trigger, change the time so that it will run in a couple of minutes. Once everything is configured correctly, save the trigger and head back to the Configuration homepage and wait for a build to be triggered!

New Trigger

Name

Build Priority ▼
This determines the order to run builds when there are more builds queued than available agents.

Enabled

Force Repository Check
Check for changes in all repositories associated with this configuration every time a build is started by this trigger.

Type ▼

Time
When to trigger the build (24 hour format).

Repeat ▼

Variables: ▼ +

Reviewing your Automated Build

Once your build has begun to execute, you should see that the **Started By** value is no longer set to your name, but rather your triggers name. Triggered builds are executed in the exact same way as manual builds and if you check your ContinuaTutorial folder, you will see that this daily trigger is updating the folder too.

ACTIVITY	HISTORY	METRICS	CHANGES	AGENTS					
Running Builds (1)									
Build #	State	Stages	Started By	Branches	Started	Duration	Changes		
1.0.054	Stage Initialising	<div style="width: 20px; height: 10px; border: 1px solid #ccc; background-color: #ccc;"></div>	My First Daily Trigger	master	2 seconds ago	2 seconds	1 Changes	<input type="button" value="Stop"/>	
Queued Builds									
Build #	State	Stages	Started By	Branches	Started	Elapsed	Changes		
No queued Builds were found.									
Recently Completed Builds (10)									
Build #	State	Stages	Started by	Branches	Finished	Duration	Changes	Artifacts	Tags
1.0.053	[Pin] Build Completed	<div style="width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #0070c0;"></div>	Dave McConnell	master	1 hour, 41 minutes ago	20 seconds	1 Changes	15 Files	None
1.0.052	[Pin] Build Completed	<div style="width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #0070c0;"></div>	Dave McConnell	master	1 hour, 55 minutes ago	21 seconds	1 Changes	15 Files	None
1.0.051	[Pin] Build Completed	<div style="width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #0070c0;"></div>	Dave McConnell	master	2 hours, 15 minutes ago	18 seconds	1 Changes	15 Files	None
1.0.050	[Pin] Build Completed	<div style="width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #0070c0;"></div>	Dave McConnell	master	2 hours, 17 minutes ago	23 seconds	1 Changes	15 Files	None

Tutorial Completed

A final congratulations for successfully completing our Continua tutorial. Feel free to leave all of the components created in this tutorial running in Continua to use as a reference. If you come back to this configuration in a few weeks and there has been some activity on GitHub then you will see some builds that were executed from our repository trigger.

You should now have a basic understanding of how Continua works and hopefully you are now contemplating how Continua can be used within your own development environment.

There are still many more aspects of Continua that were not discussed in this tutorial. If you would like to get more out of Continua then try out one of our other, more advanced tutorials.