Migrating from FinalBuilder Server

Key Differences

Whilst both Continua and FinalBuilder Server (FBS) are both Continuous Integration Servers, they are quite different in how they operate. Continua CI's design is based on feedback from FinalBuilder Server customers, and with a view to making it appeal to more users (FBS is only of use to FinalBuilder Users). The differences in concepts between the two products make it difficult to create an automated migration from FBS to Continua.

Working with FinalBuilder Projects

Perhaps the biggest difference for FBS users is where the FinalBuilder Project Files live. In FBS, the FinalBuilder project files (.fbp7/.fbz7) are managed by FBS and each FBS project references a single FB projects. In Continua, your FinalBuilder Project files must be in a version control Repository that is referenced by your Configuration. Continua is not tied to FinalBuilder in any way, FinalBuilder is just one of a number of different Build Runner Actions available.

Where and when the build Runs

FinalBuilder Server projects all run on the same machine, the one where FBS is installed. This unfortunately limits how many builds can be run concurrently. FBS also doesn't allow multiple builds of the same project to run concurrently, so for example a CI build triggered by a checkin, and a manually started build for the same project cannot run at the same time. The main reason for this is that the working folder and source code are managed by the FinalBuilder project.

Continua CI uses Build Agents to run the builds. Agents can be installed on the same machine as Continua Server, or on other machines. Each agent can run multiple concurrent builds (limited only by hardware resources), and each build get's its own working folder and copy of the source code (which is managed by Continua). When a build is queued in Continua, it's requirements (compilers & other tools needed) are evaluated against the available Agents capabilities, and a suitable agent is selected. The build will run when a suitable agent is available to run the build. This may be immediately or at a later time. If no suitable agent is available, then the build will stay on the queue until one becomes available or the build is cancelled by a user.

Continua and FinalBuilder

Continua includes a FinalBuilder Action which will run any FinalBuilder Project which is available in the build's workspace. To get the FinalBuilder project into the build workspace, it needs to be in a Repository which is associated with the Configuration. Note that this action only supports FinalBuilder 7.0.0.1795 or later, if you are using older versions of FinalBuilder, you can still use them with the Execute Program Action. FinalBuilder needs to be installed on each Agent machine (the agent will detect that it is installed, and report that to the server).

FinalBuilder Project Variables

Since Continua lacks the tight integration with FinalBuilder that FBS has, it has no knowledge of the internals of the FinalBuilder Project and that includes Project Variables. The FinalBuilder Action in Continua allows you to set the values of those project variables from the action, but you will need to know what those project variables are. Continua is unable to inspect the FinalBuilder Project to determine the variables needed as it has no access to the FinalBuilder Project file at design time. We are currently looking at ways to make this easier.