

MediaPortal ShowTimes Plugins Suite

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Author: Nephilim

Description

The MediaPortal ShowTimes plugin suite consists of two MediaPortal plugins plus one external application that handles the downloading of movie posters, Apple trailers, local theater playing times and IMDB data. It can also download FanArt picture and extra details from The Movie DataBase. The MediaPortal plugins are split into a GUI portion and a process plugin. The process plugin handles the updating of the movie data while the GUI displays the information on screen. There are currently many skins included.

The ShowTimes Grabber handles all of the downloading of the movie information via an external application called MTSA.exe. You can have downloads forced to launch upon MediaPortal startup or schedule to launch after a certain period of days. The GUI has the ability to force the grabber to refresh the data it finds that the current date is past the next update date. There are different checks to ensure that the data is up to date.

Requirements

In order to run the ShowTimes Suite, the following is required:

- MediaPortal 1.0 or greater
- QuickTime or Quicktime alternative installed to handle playing the downloaded Trailers in the default MP Player.
- VideoLan Plugin only if you want to playing QuickTime trailers streams.
- FLV Slippert for FLV trailers (remember too add “.flv” extension to MP), download from: <http://sourceforge.net/projects/guliverkli2/>
- External grabber application, mtsa.exe (included with the archive)

Current Limitations

The local movie showtime data is scraped from Yahoo and other (country dependant). It is possible that for a given theater, the amount of data you wish to download may not be available. If this happens, you will be notified by a message box (if you do a manual download from the Grabber Configuration) or by a Notify Box in the MP GUI.

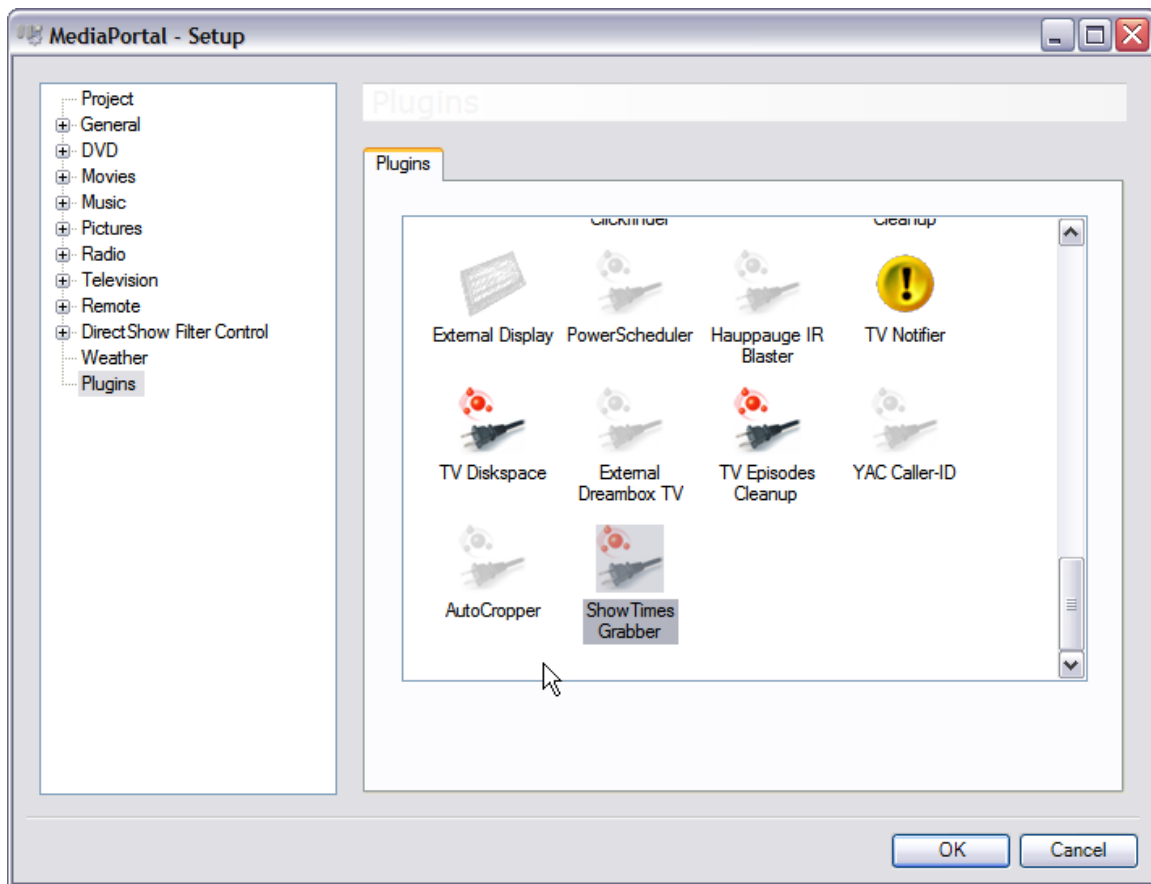
Installation

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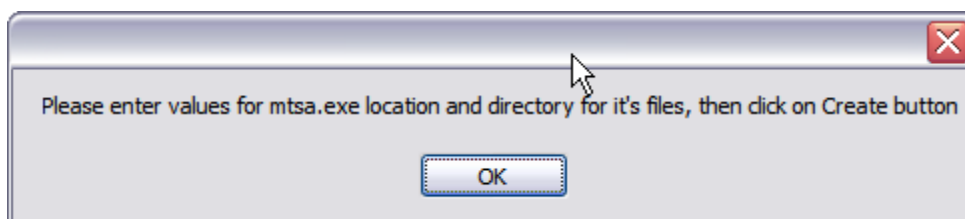
- Run the MPI installation package
- Create a directory for the mtsa.exe executable and place it in that directory. This directory will contain all of the data (posters, trailers and showtime data).

Configuration

In order to use the ShowTimes GUI, you must first set the Grabber up. Select the ShowTimes Grabber plugin from the Plugins tab. Remember, you have to switch to advanced mode in order to view Process Plugins.

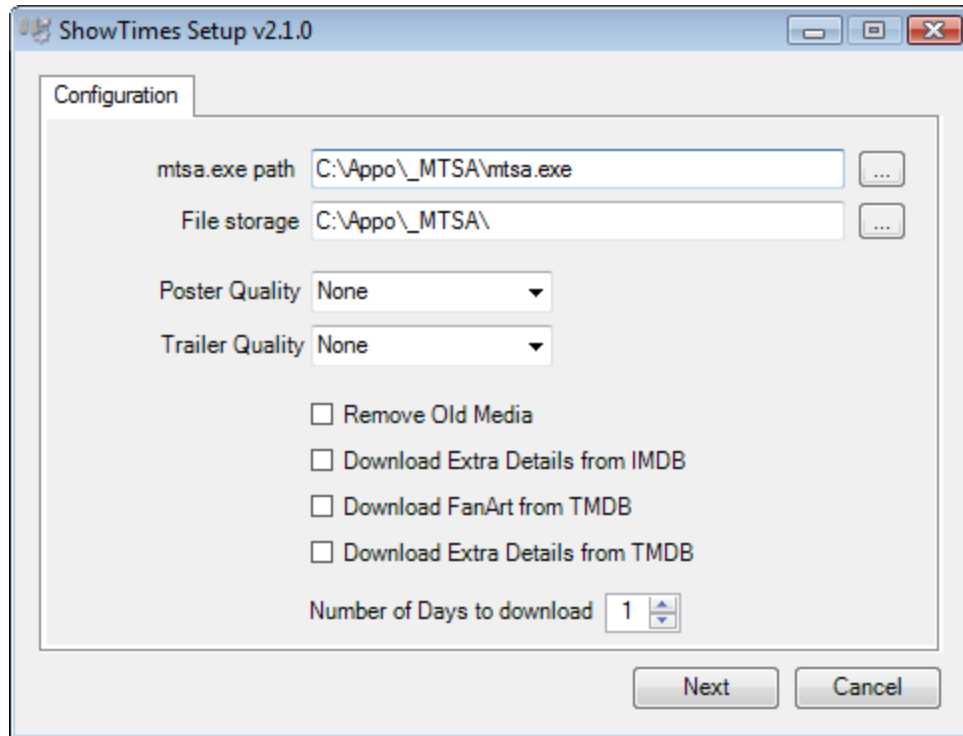


On your first run, you will be asked to locate the mtsa.exe and its directory for files. The Create button will allow you to go to the next step.



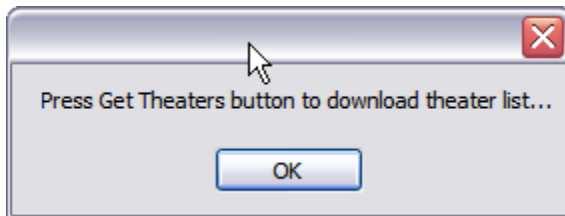
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You will then get the next dialog:



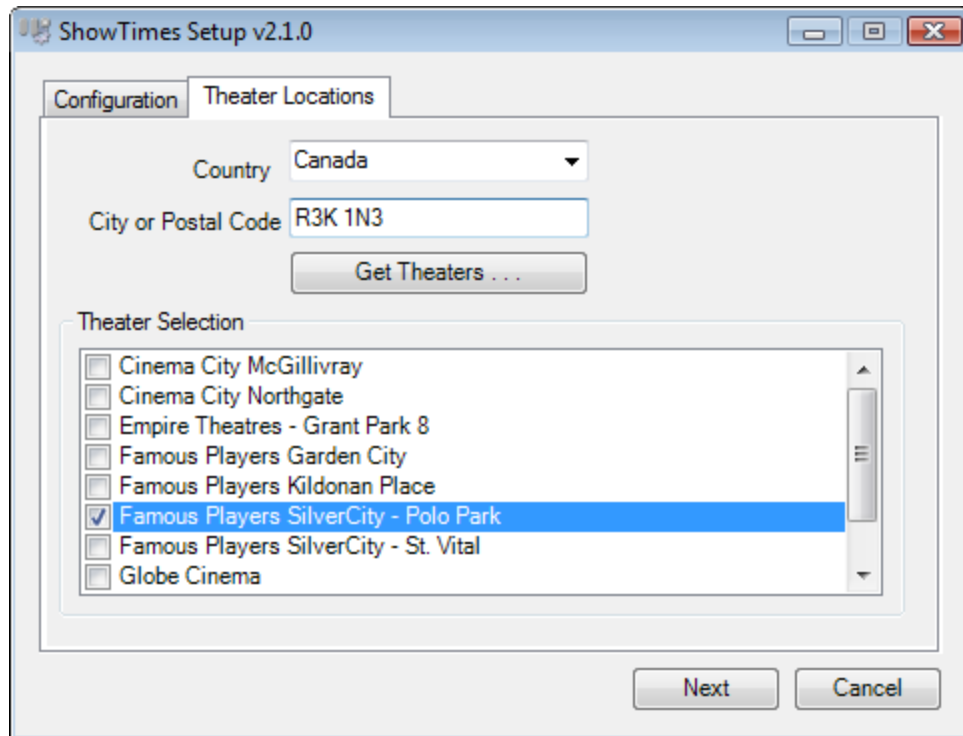
If everything is how you want it, click the Next button. If you select the Remove Old Media, the mtsa.exe application will remove outdated posters and trailers for you.

Upon pressing the Next button, you will get a dialog stating that there are no theaters found for Canada/R3K 1N3. This is just the defaults, click on OK and then you will be asked to

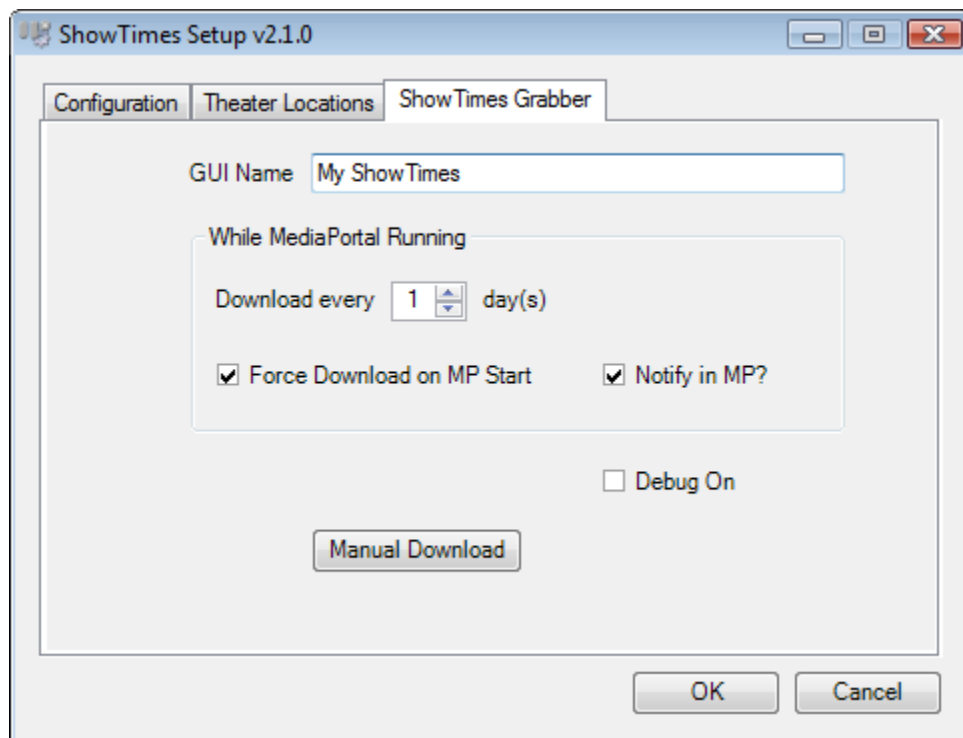


This will get the theaters for the Country and City/Postal code that you want to download theater information for. **You can set several cities. Just separate each city with the "|" (pipe) character.** After the theater data is downloaded, you must select a theater to download information for:

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Click on the next button and you will be taken to the next screen:



On this screen, you can select when to do a download while MP is running. if the movie information is downloaded everytime MP starts and if you wish to be notified while MP is running of anything the Grabber needs to report. The Debug On will allow for

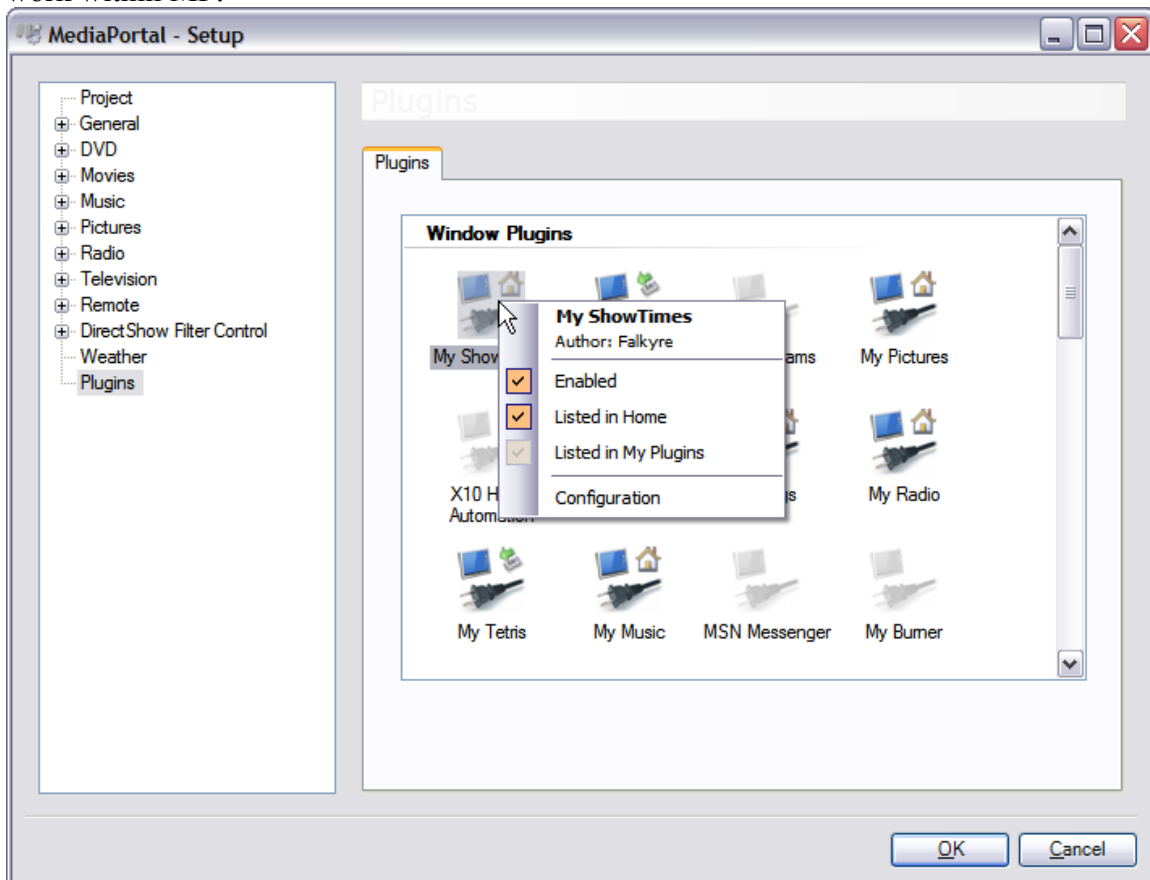
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troubleshooting information to be entered into the Configuration.log file or the MediaPortal.log file. The log level is set to debug, so in order to get in depth logging, MP must be set to debug level logging as well.

If this is the first time running the configuration, **I strongly suggest you click on Manual Download as this will do your initial download.** Be aware that this could be lengthy depending on your Network connection and the quality of the trailers and posters.

NOTE:

The Windows plugin does not have a configuration portion, in fact it will tell you to run the configuration from the ShowTimes Grabber. You must enable it in to get the GUI to work within MP.



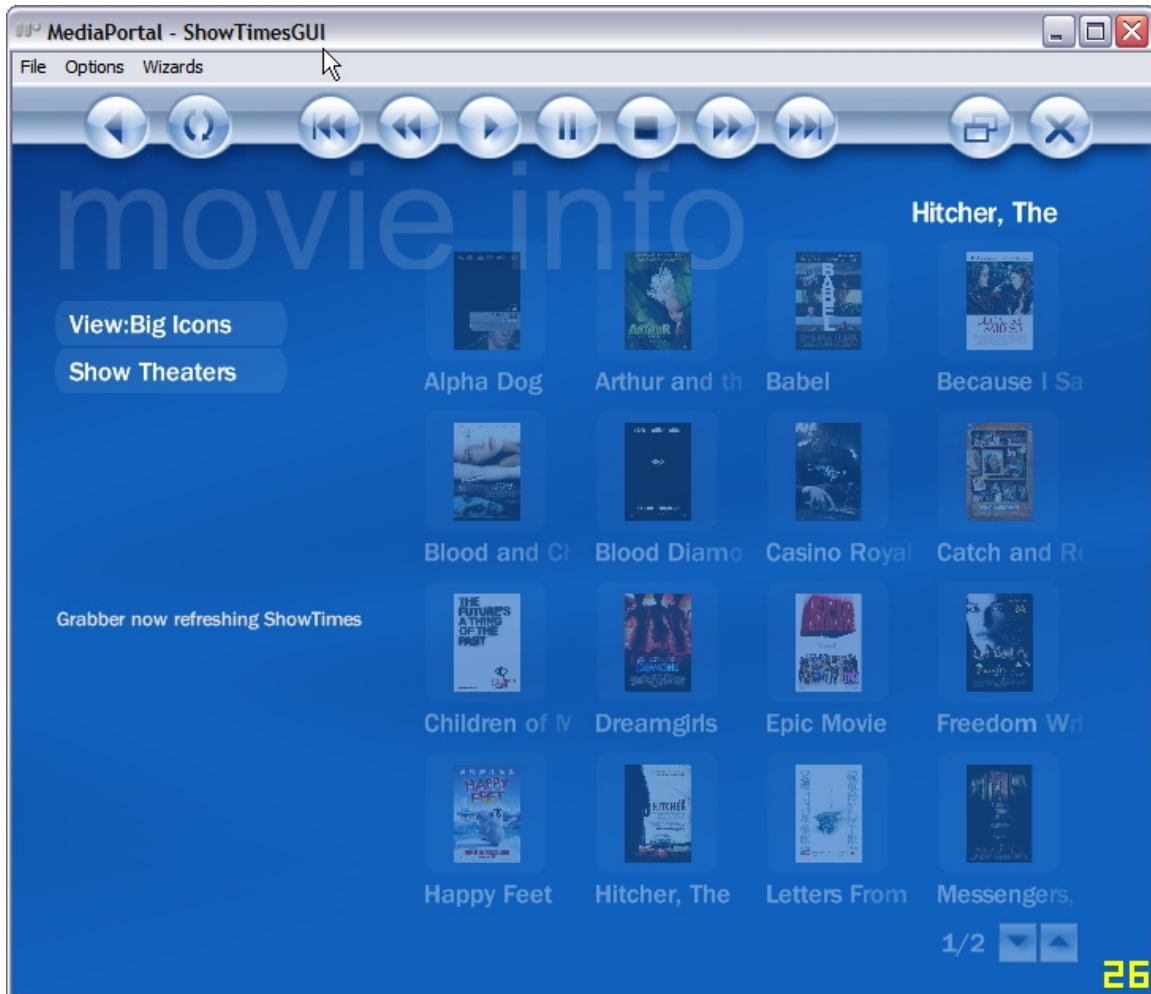
GUI Flow

Now that the actual setup is complete, you can start viewing your movie data in MP. If you have My ShowTimes listed in My Plugins, then click to the My Plugins and then to My ShowTimes.

The initial view shows all of the movies for all of your Theaters in the center. On the left (or right – it's skin dependant) hand side are buttons to switch the views between Big

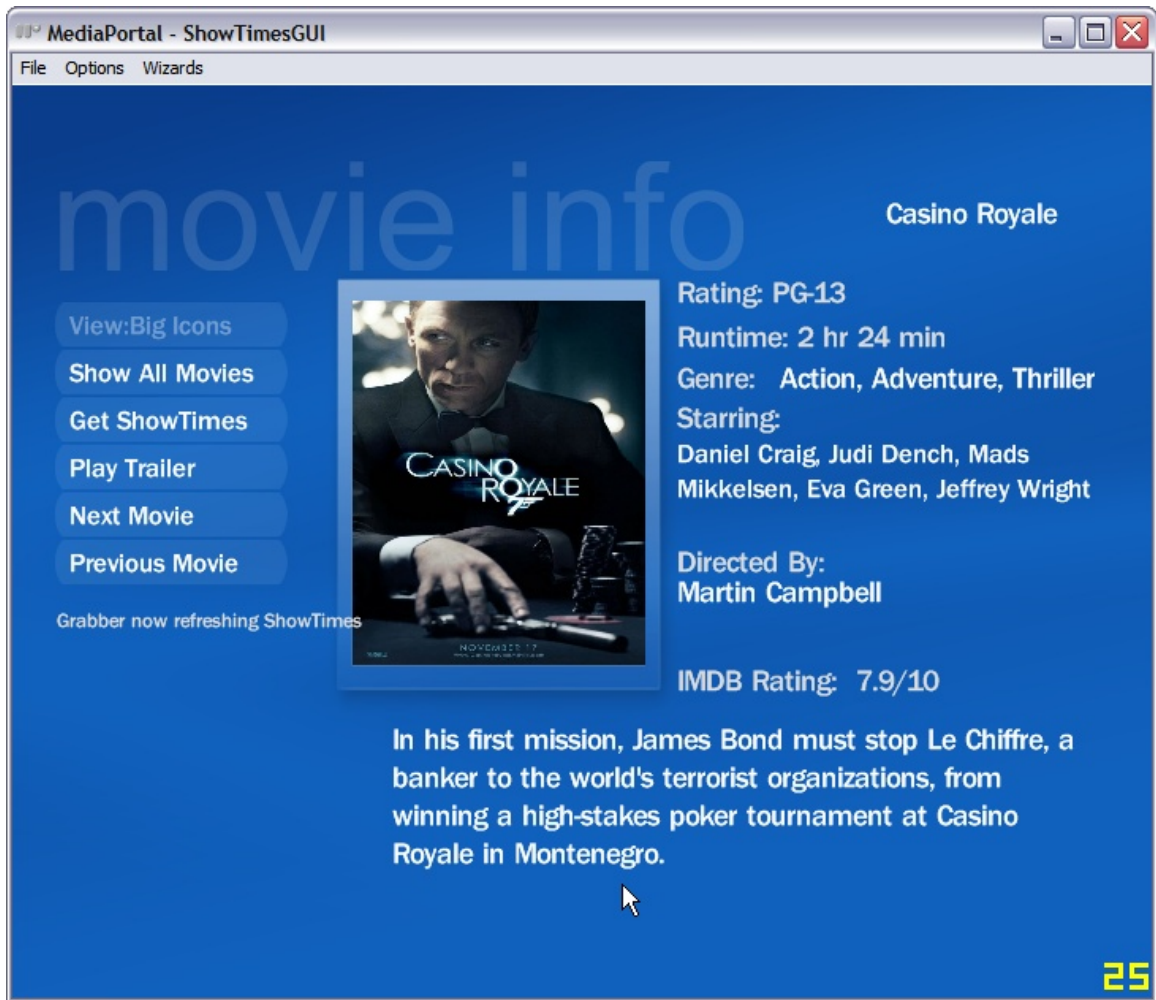
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Icons (the default), List view or Small Icons to a Theater View. There is also a section that will display your next refresh time or if the Grabber is currently running

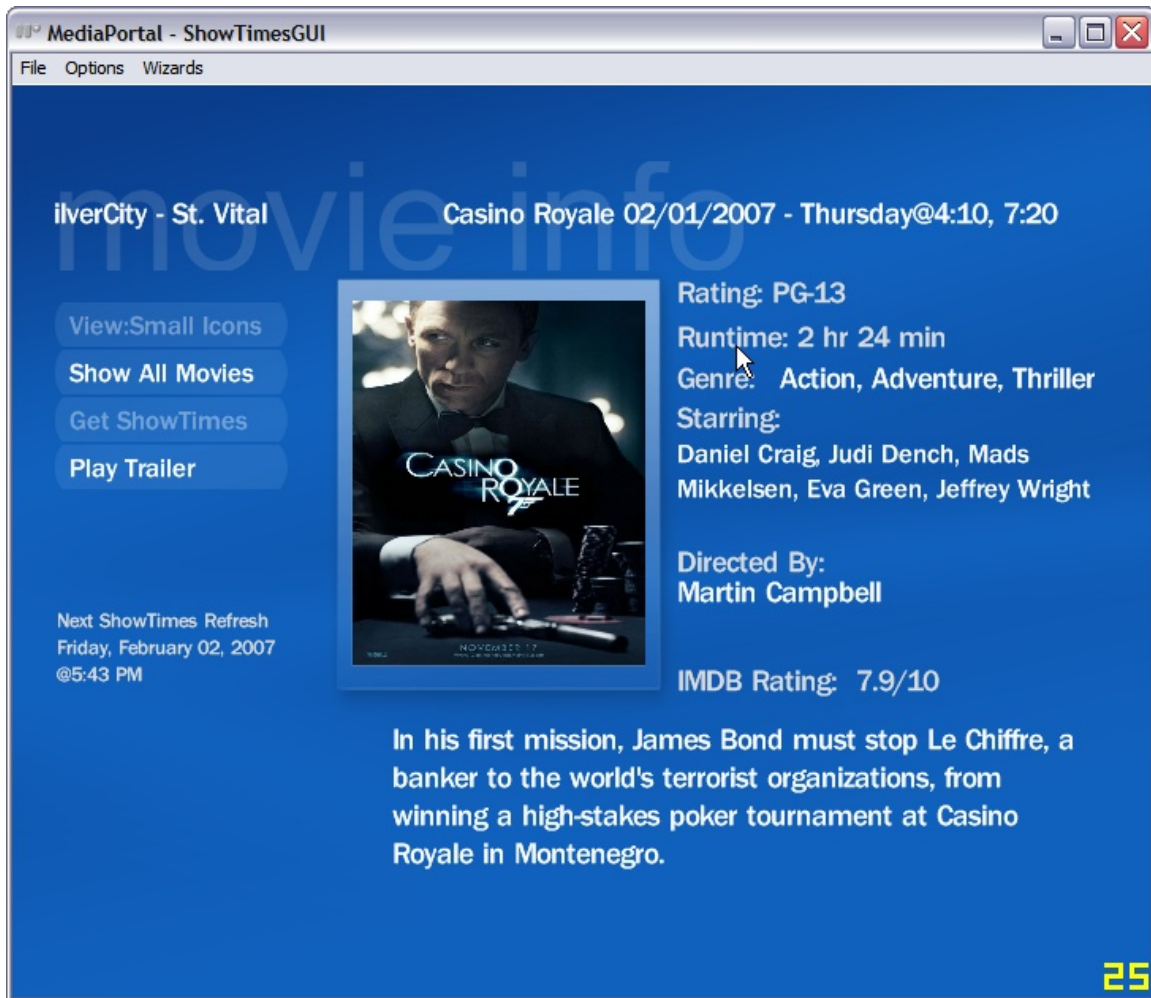


If you click on one of the movies, you will be provided information on that movie as shown in the next picture. You now have buttons to switch back to all the movies (Show All Movies). You can switch back to the all the movies by pressing ESC also. Get the ShowTimes for the selected movie, show the next or previous movie in the complete list. There is also a Play Trailer button which will load the QuickTime trailer that was downloaded. If there is not a trailer available, then the Play Trailer is disabled. **NOTE:** If there is any information that was not downloaded, the field on the screen is filled in with an NA. This is typically data that can't be downloaded from IMDB or TMDB.

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Clicking on Get ShowTimes provides a screen with a list of all of your theaters. Select a theater, then you will be provided a date. Select the date and you will be shown the movie view with the Theatre Name and ShowTimes that the movie is playing on the date you selected.

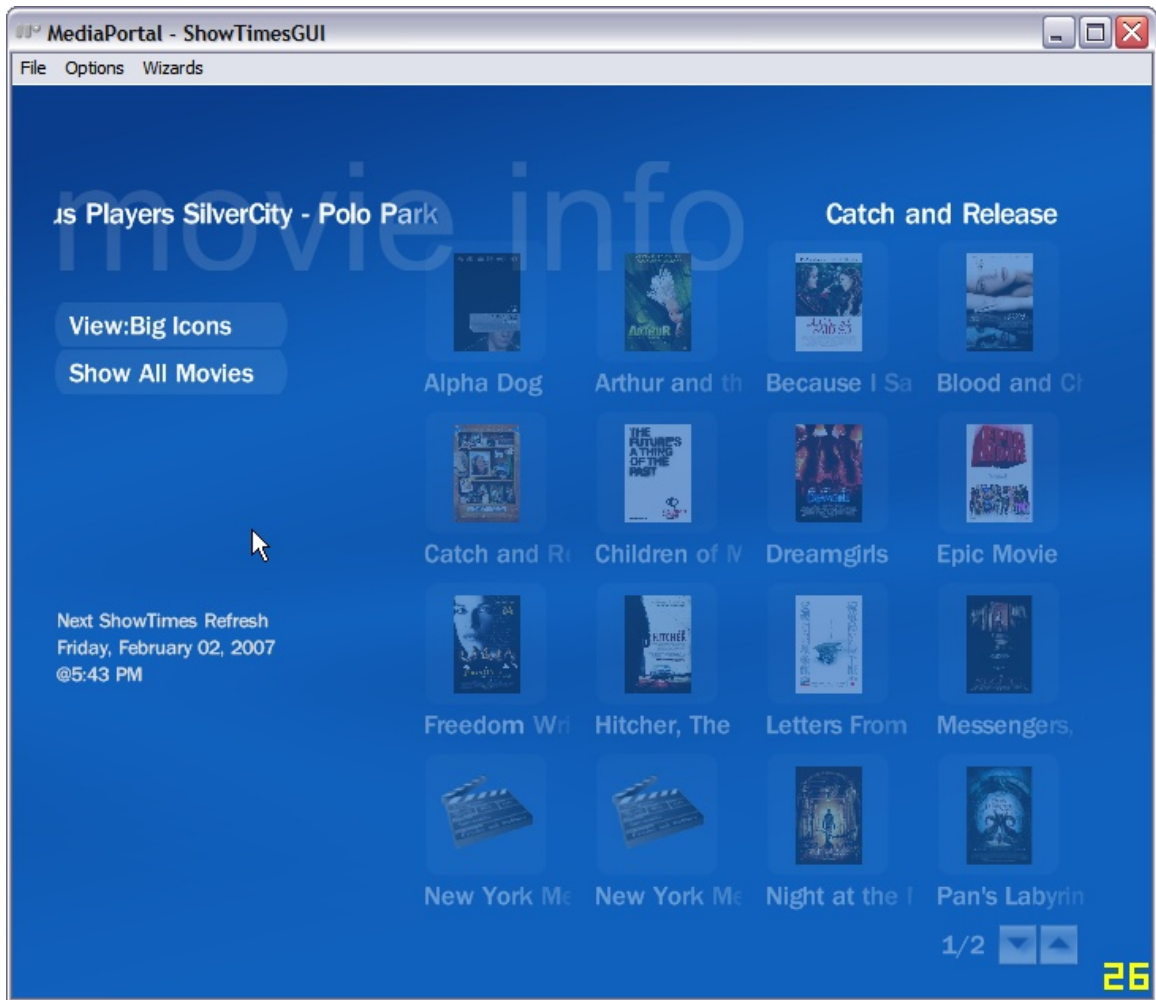


You will now notice that there are no next or previous buttons and that the Get ShowTimes button is disabled. In order to make another selection, you must press the Show All Movies button to get back to the main view.

Show Theaters

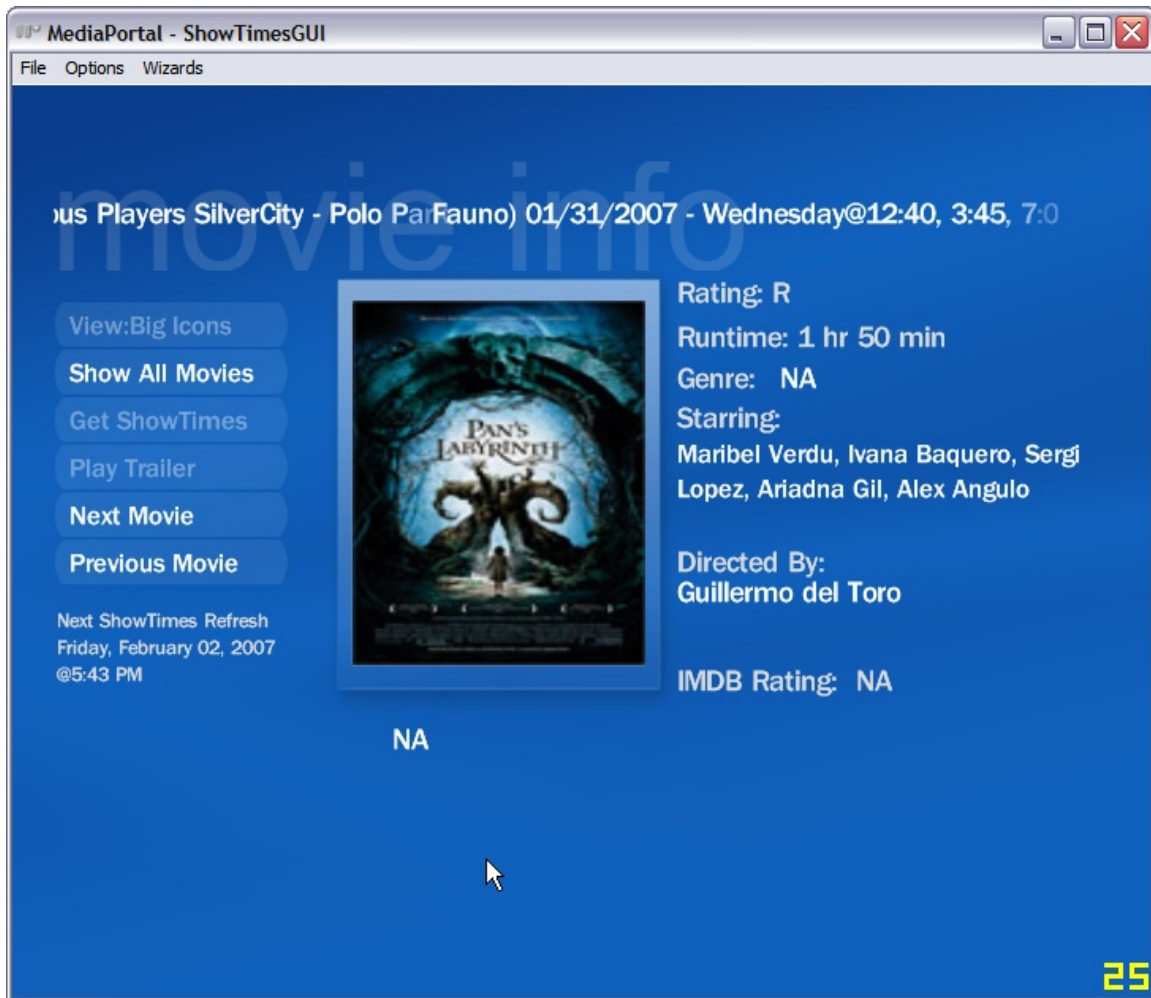
From the main view, if you select the Show Theaters button, you will be presented with a list of theaters. Then select the date you want to show. Once you select the date, you will be provided a list of **ALL** movies playing in the theater you selected for the date you selected. This is shown below:

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If you click on the Show All Movies or ESC, you will be taken back to the list of all the movies. If you select a movie in the list shown above, you will be provided the movie with all of the date and movie theater information as determined by your previous selection.

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NOTE: This movie does not have data from IMDB or TMDB including the plot, genre and rating so **NA** is placed in those areas. This movie, and others with brackets in the name, seem to have exposed a bug in the parsing of the mtsa.exe application and the author of that application is looking into it.

Notice that there are now a next and previous button whereas in the view where you started from the list of all the movies and drilled down to one there was not. The reason for this is that you have preselected the theater and date first and were presented a listing of all the movies for that theater and date. Pressing next and previous will allow you to loop through the movies for that theater on the date selected.

By pressing ESC in this you you'll switch back to the Movie List related to the Theater selected. Pressing ESC again will switch to the All Movie List View.

GUI Notes

- When the GUI is running, it will check if the movie data is out dated and force the grabber to do a refresh
- If MP is exited, the GUI will make sure that there are no mtsa.exe processes running.
- The GUI and the Grabber use the GUIPropertyManager extensively to pass data back and forth as well as to flag different things for each plugin to do.
- You can manually update the data by pressing the “Context Menu” button (F9)

Thanks

Psycho Reptile, StudR for their help and suggestions and, especially, the original developer Falkyre (who also wrote most of this document).