


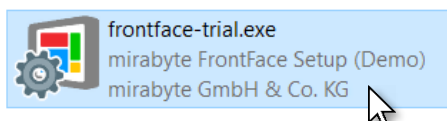
Displaying Calendar Data with FrontFace: How to bring appointments, schedules and room occupancy plans to your screen!




Whether current appointments, room occupancy plans or schedules for events — displaying calendar data on digital signage screens is a typical and frequently needed requirement. In this quick start tutorial, we will show you from scratch how to easily bring your calendar data to your large screen or TV with our Digital Signage & Kiosk software FrontFace! In addition to Excel spreadsheets, the supported calendar data sources include Microsoft Exchange Server (Outlook), Lotus Domino (Notes) and iCalendar (ICS).

1 Downloading and Installing *FrontFace*:

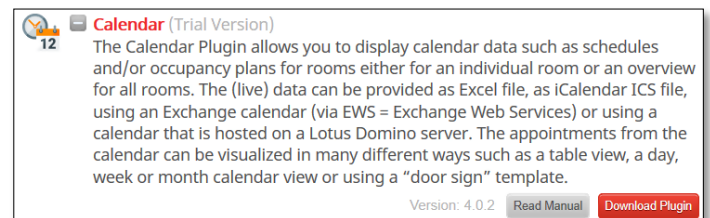
First, please visit the *FrontFace* product website <https://www.mirabyte.com/en/frontface/> and click on the  button to download the trial version (or the full version in case you have a license). After downloading, run the installation package `frontface-trial.exe` on your workstation PC and select the installation option "Full Installation (incl. FrontFace Assistant)."



2 Downloading the Calendar Plugin for *FrontFace*:

Displaying calendar data is by default not an integrated feature of *FrontFace*. However, *FrontFace* supports so-called "Plugins" that can be used to easily add additional functions, if needed. Thus, the functionality for displaying appointments and calendar data is also available as a plugin, which you first must download separately and then install. To do this, please go back to the web page mentioned in [step 1](#) and click on the  button at the bottom of the page below "Content Plugins" next to the entry "Calendar" in order to download the calendar plugin. Save the downloaded file `Calendar.ffapx` at a suitable location on your PC (e.g. at "Downloads").

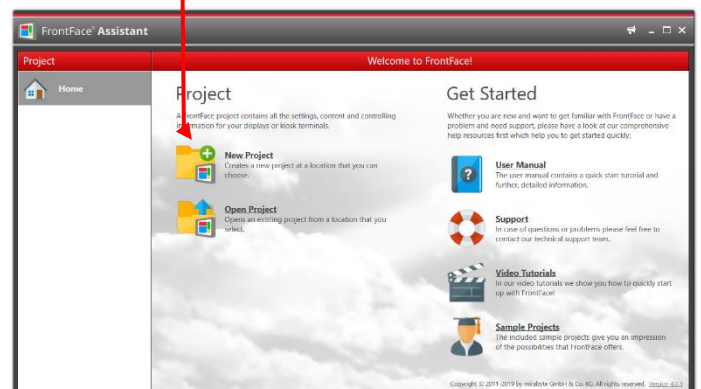
<https://www.mirabyte.com/>



If you have purchased the full version of the calendar plugin, please download the full version instead from the [customer account section](#) on the mirabyte home page.

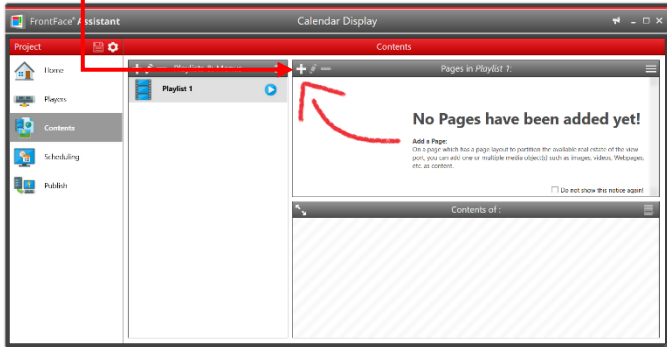
3 Creating a Project and Installing the Calendar Plugin:

Start the "FrontFace Assistant" from the Windows start menu and click on "New Project" on the home page of the application:

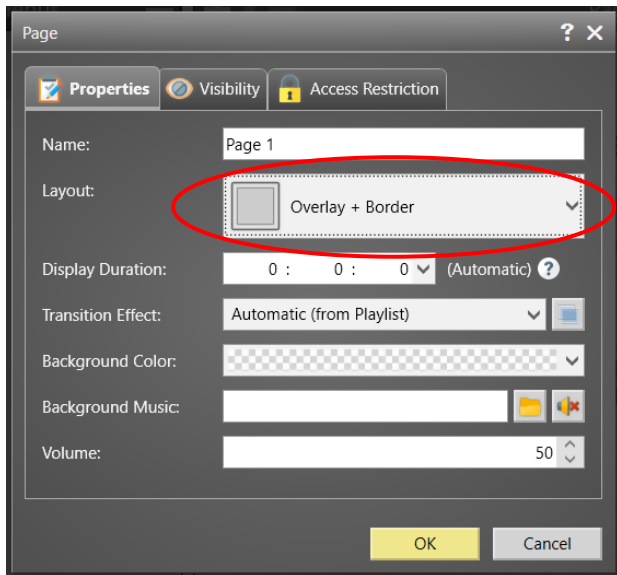


Enter a name for the new project (e.g. "Calendar Display") and then select a suitable location on your hard disk where you wish to store the project, such as "Documents." As project type you should select "Digital Signage."

Once the project has been created, click on "Contents" in the main menu of the *FrontFace Assistant*. There an empty playlist has already been created. Now add a page to that playlist by clicking the "+" button above the list of pages:

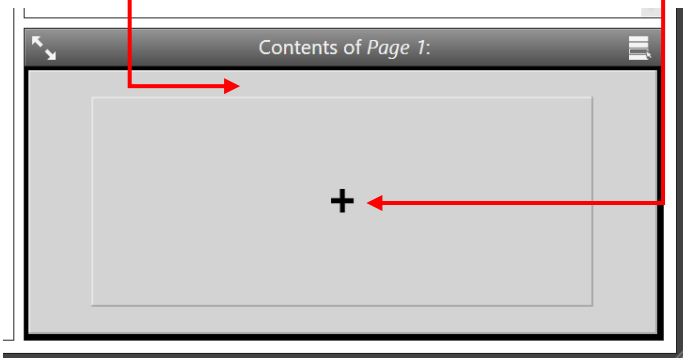


In order to make the presentation of the calendar data a little more appealing, please select the layout "Overlay + Border" as page layout (you will have to scroll down a bit in the drop-down list of available layouts!).



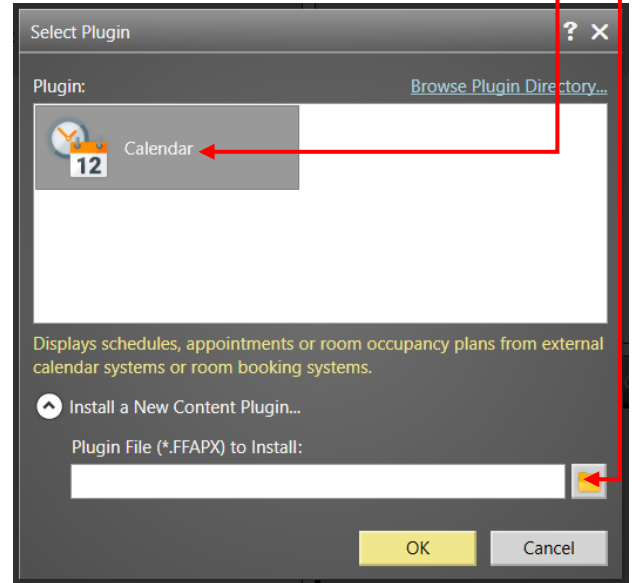
After confirming with "OK," the new page has been added to your playlist.

In the "Contents of..." area, you can now see that the layout of the page consists of two containers, one for the picture in the background (wallpaper) and another one, a little smaller, in the foreground:



First, click on the background container and select "Image" as the media object. Next, select a JPEG or PNG graphic from your hard drive that will serve as the background graphic for the calendar view. After you have selected the image file, change the "Stretching" option to "Uniform to Fill" and confirm with "OK."

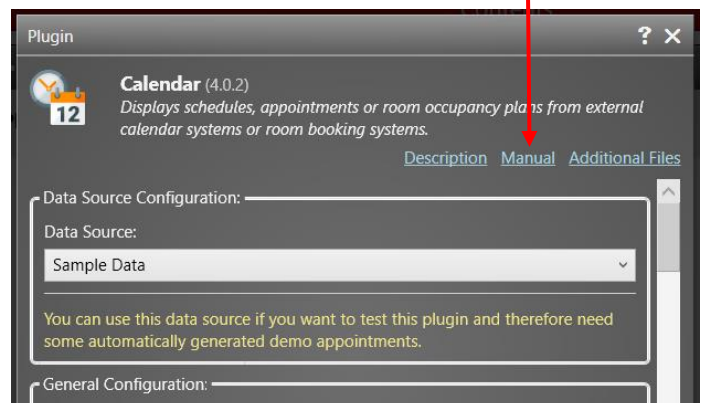
Next, click on the container in the foreground of the page and select "Plugin" as the media object. The dialog with the available plugins is initially empty. Therefore, you must first install the previously downloaded Calendar plugin by selecting the `Calendar.ffapx` file for installation. Then you can select the "Calendar" plugin:



4 Configuring the Calendar Plugin:

In order for the calendar plugin to be able to display your data, you must specify where you want to get information from (data source). In addition, you must specify how the presentation is to be made (layout, colors, font, etc.).

Available data sources include Excel spreadsheets, Microsoft Exchange Server (Outlook), Lotus Domino (Notes), and iCalendar/ICS (such as Google Calendar). For more detailed information on the configuration of the individual data sources, please refer to the manual that comes with the plugin. You can easily open this by clicking on the "Manual" link in the settings dialog of the plugin or alternatively open it from the download area of the *FrontFace* website.

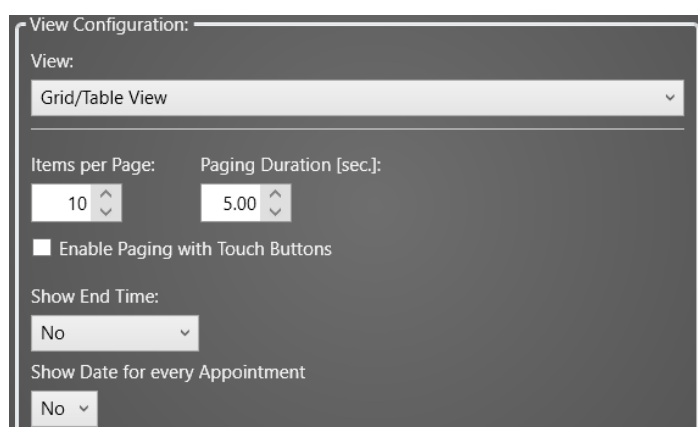


For the sake of simplicity, we will use the built-in example data source for this example. This automatically creates some random "appointments" so you can get started right away instead of having to provide a real data source first.

The settings dialog of the calendar plugin is divided into several sections: In the "General Configuration" section, you can, for example, specify a headline or determine whether an additional text should be displayed next to the title of each appointment. In addition, you can specify whether already expired appointments are still to be shown or not. Apart from the refresh interval for querying the data source, you can also specify a text that will be displayed if there are no appointments.

In the "Style & Design Configuration" section you define the visual appearance, e.g., the font style, text and background colors, or the margins (page spacing).

However, to specify how the appointments are actually displayed on the screen, select a view type from the "View Configuration":



Here you can choose between a **Grid/Table View**, a **Calendar View** (day, week, or month) or the option **Single/Door Sign**. The latter always displays only one (the current) appointment and the following one and can thus be used as a digital door sign for meeting rooms, etc.


Depending on the selection of the view, various settings are available. For example, in the table view, you can specify how many appointments (i.e. lines) should be displayed on a screen page and how long the paging interval should be (this is important if there are more appointments than lines on a screen page). The plugin will then "flip" the pages with appointments after expiration of the paging interval).

Many views also require defining the time window. In addition to an offset (Today, 00:00 + n hours), you can also specify the length of the time window.


It is best if you just try out the various options one by one and check the result in the preview (see [step 5](#)). In this way you can find the best configuration for you.

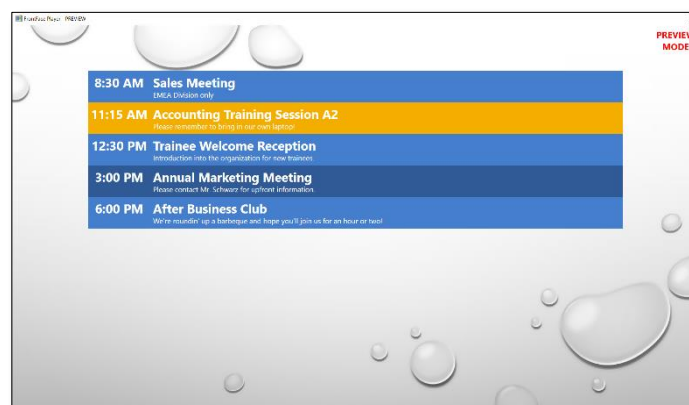
5 Checking the Results in Preview Mode:


After you have configured the calendar plugin, close the settings dialog by clicking on "OK."

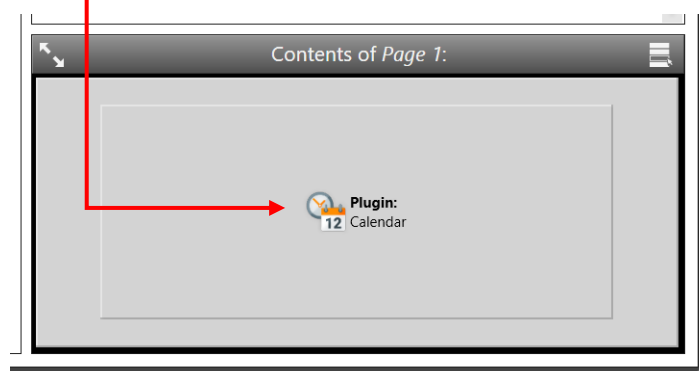
To see what your playlist page with the plugin will look like later on the screen, click on the preview button of the playlist or the page: 

<https://www.mirabyte.com/>

After a few seconds, the preview window appears, and you can see the result. To exit the preview, click the close button () or press the **ESC** button.



To open up the settings dialog of the calendar plugin again and make changes to the configuration, just click on the container with the plugin  in the "Contents of Page 1" area below the list of pages:



6 What's next?

You have now successfully created a playlist with a page and integrated the calendar plugin on it. The next step is to use a dedicated, real, data source instead of the sample data source. Please refer to the calendar plugin manual for details for the required settings and prerequisites.

To display the calendar data on a real large screen or TV, you must install the *FrontFace Player App* on the player PC connected to the screen. Then you can add this PC in the *FrontFace Assistant* in the "Player" section and transfer the contents and settings to the player by clicking on "Publish." For information on how to operate and install *FrontFace*, please refer to the *FrontFace* user manual and the video tutorials available at <https://www.mirabyte.com/go/frontface/>.

If you have any technical questions about *FrontFace*, the featured calendar plugin or this tutorial, please feel free to contact our support. Just visit our homepage to find out how to contact us: <http://www.mirabyte.com/en/support/> 