

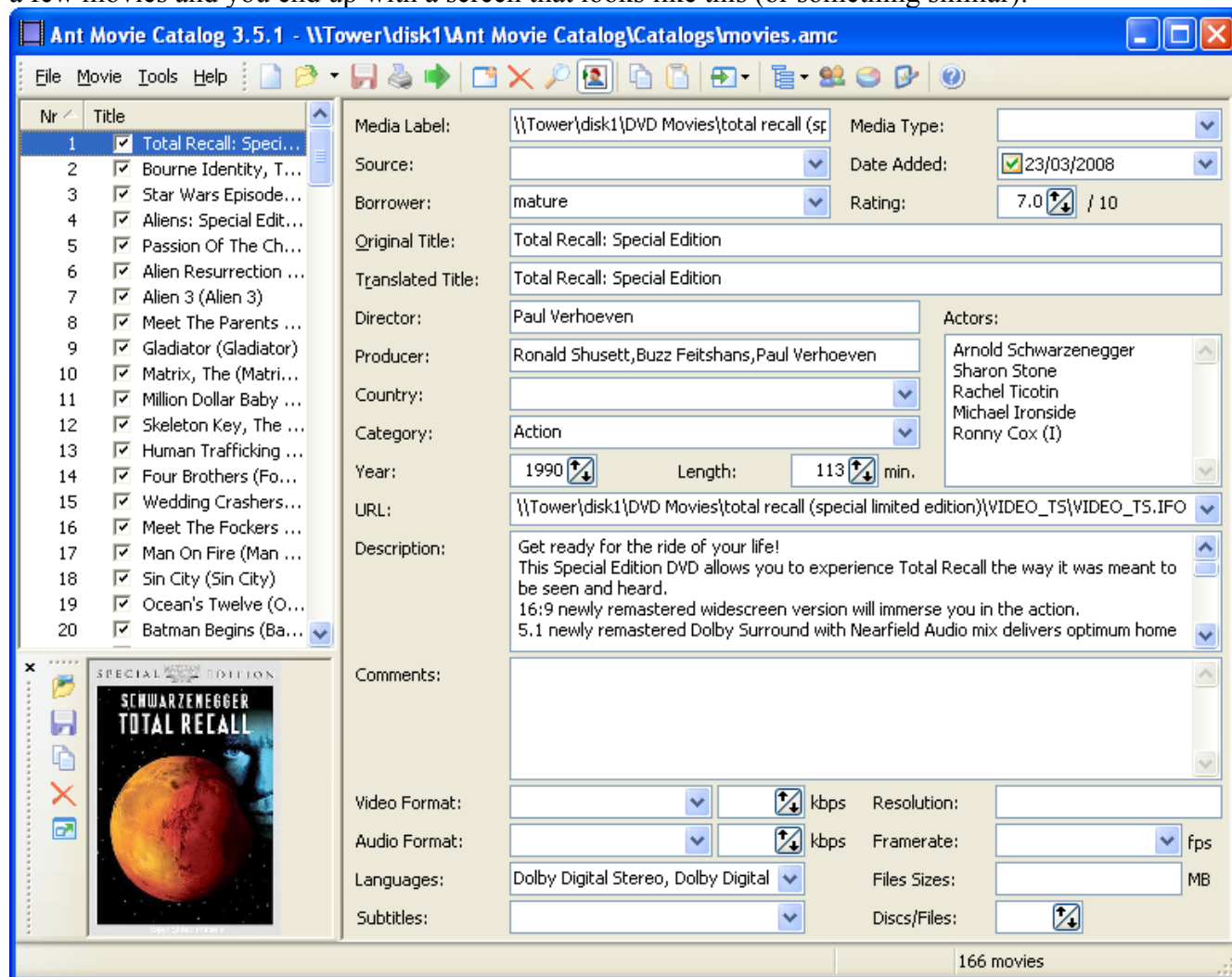
Marbles Take on Using Xant

So there has been quite a bit of information on using the Xant plugin and Ant Movie Catalog (AMC), so what's the point of another document? Well, this is my take on how to use this awesome plugin and program. Most of this doc will be repeated in my coming Glass skin release, but I figured this information is very worth while for all to read over.

Basically the Xant plugin consists of the actual plugin itself, along with a template .xml (moviestemplate.xml), an .ini file (xant.ini) and the movie catalog in AMC. I'm not going to dwell on the plugin .dll itself, but I will discuss in details all the other parts.

AMC and the Catalog

I will start with using AMC. Using my steps, one can use just one catalog for every movie, whether it be hdef, or DVD, or adult, x-rated, children etc. This makes it easy to maintain just one catalog, as opposed to maintaining many catalogs. So now assuming you know the basics of AMC, you've entered a few movies and you end up with a screen that looks like this (or something similar):



Most of the variables are filled in when you run the movie scripts (F6). I normally use DVDEmpire as it has decent descriptions, and their artwork is top-notch and hi-rez. The fields that aren't filled in by the script, and manually edited are the "Media Label", "Borrower" and "URL".

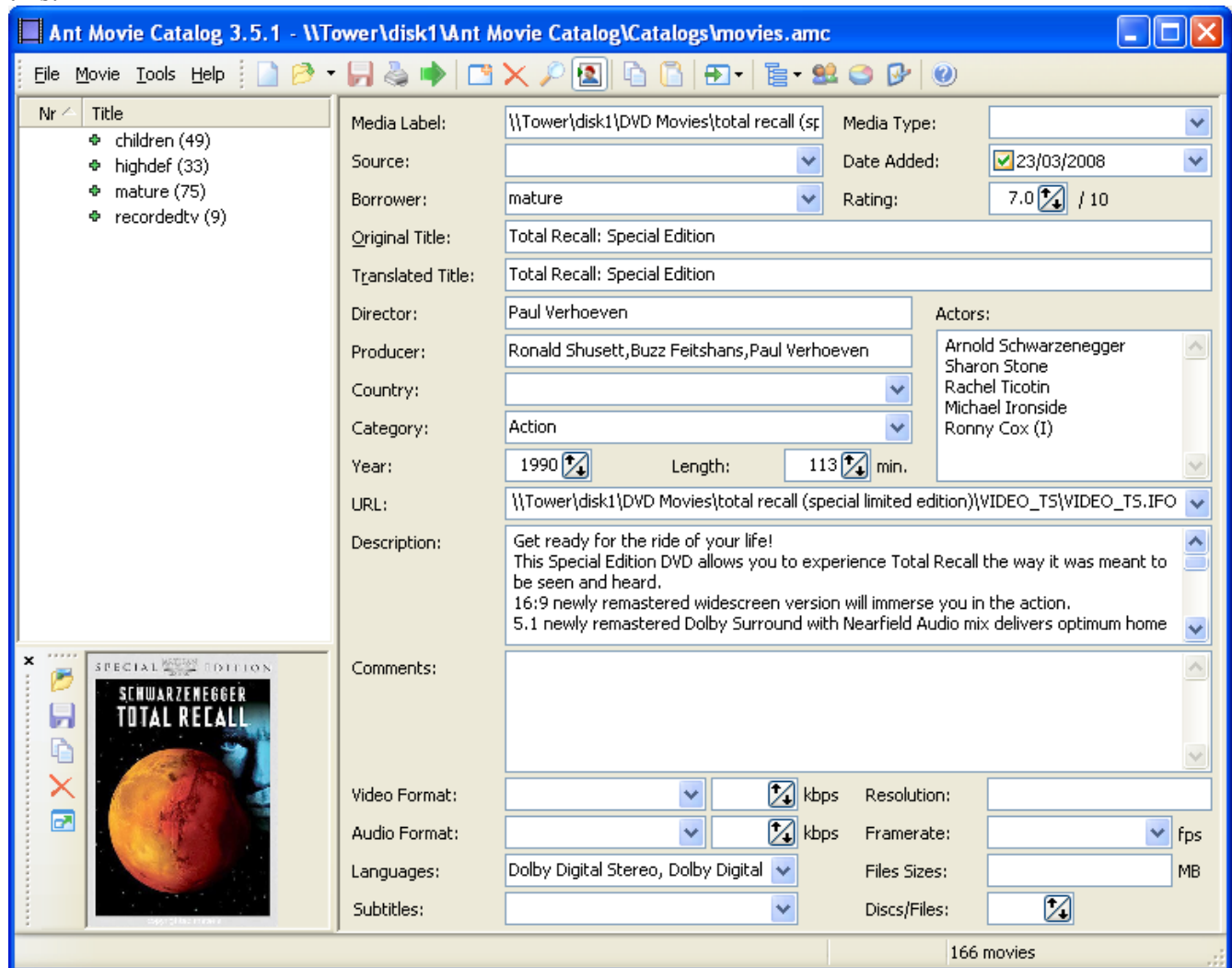
“Media Label” defines the location of the fanart (if available) used for each movie.

“Borrower” defines exactly which xlobby database to place the movie entry to. In my case I have children, mature (r-rated movies), recorded TV movies, and hidef movies.

“URL” is the actual location of the media playback file to play.

Tip:

You will notice the list of movies down the left side. This will get rather big and unsorted when mixed with all sorts of movie types. To aid in cleaning this up, you can go to AMC's Tools then Group by. Then you can pick any one of the fields to sort on. I like to sort on “Borrower” so my view looks like this:



Xant.ini

So once you have a catalog setup for yourself. The next step is to utilize this catalog in Xlobby. Now to do this, the Xant plugin requires some information on where to look for the catalog, and then what to do with the catalog. This is the reason for the .ini file. A typical .ini file may have entries like this below:

```
[HiDef]
input=\\Tower\disk1\Ant Movie Catalog\Catalogs\movies.amc
output=c:\Program Files\Xlobby\databases\high_def.xml
images=\\Tower\disk1\Ant Movie Catalog\Pochettes movies\highdef\
sort=$$ITEM_ORIGINALTITLE
template=c:\Program Files\Xlobby\plugins\moviestemplate.xml
filters=$$ITEM_BORROWER(high def)
```

[HiDef] is the title of the entry, and is used within Xlobby to refresh databases

input – is the location of the Ant catalog

output – is the name and the location of the resulting xlobby database.xml file

images – is the location to place the DVD coverart, as when importing images in AMC, it embeds the coverart into the .amc file.

sort – defines which AMC field to sort on.

template – is the location of the Xant template file.

filters – defines the field to look at to sort the movies into their proper database.

So following the above examples, and since I have defined my media into four categories (children, mature, recordedTV, and hidef), my entries in the .ini file are the following:

```
[RMovies]
input=\\Tower\disk1\Ant Movie Catalog\Catalogs\movies.amc
output=c:\Program Files\Xlobby\databases\rratedmovies.xml
images=\\Tower\disk1\Ant Movie Catalog\Pochettes movies\restricted\
sort=$$ITEM_ORIGINALTITLE
template=c:\Program Files\Xlobby\plugins\moviestemplate.xml
filters=$$ITEM_BORROWER(mature)
```

```
[ChildrenMovies]
input=\\Tower\disk1\Ant Movie Catalog\Catalogs\movies.amc
output=c:\Program Files\Xlobby\databases\childrenmovies.xml
images=\\Tower\disk1\Ant Movie Catalog\Pochettes movies\family\
sort=$$ITEM_ORIGINALTITLE
template=c:\Program Files\Xlobby\plugins\moviestemplate.xml
filters=$$ITEM_BORROWER(children)
```

```
[RecordedTV]
input=\\Tower\disk1\Ant Movie Catalog\Catalogs\movies.amc
output=c:\Program Files\Xlobby\databases\recordedtv_online.xml
images=\\Tower\disk1\Ant Movie Catalog\Pochettes movies\recorded\
sort=$$ITEM_ORIGINALTITLE
template=c:\Program Files\Xlobby\plugins\moviestemplate.xml
```

```
filters=$$ITEM_BORROWER(recordedtv)
```

```
[HiDef]
```

```
input=\\Tower\disk1\Ant Movie Catalog\Catalogs\movies.amc  
output=c:\Program Files\Xlobby\databases\high_def.xml  
images=\\Tower\disk1\Ant Movie Catalog\Pochettes movies\highdef\  
sort=$$ITEM_ORIGINALTITLE  
template=c:\Program Files\Xlobby\plugins\moviestemplate.xml  
filters=$$ITEM_BORROWER(high def)
```

The moviestemplate.xml

The moviestemplate.xml indicates to the plugin as to how to utilize the different fields from the AMC catalog in creating the xlobby database. My template is the following:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>  
<database>  
  <sortorder>sorttitle</sortorder>  
  <sortable>  
    <sort>actors</sort>  
    <sort>title</sort>  
    <sort>sorttitle</sort>  
    <sort>genre</sort>  
    <sort>director</sort>  
    <sort>year</sort>  
    <sort>starimage</sort>  
    <sort>rating</sort>  
    <sort>name</sort>  
  </sortable>  
  <template/>  
  <paths>  
    <path/>  
  </paths>  
  <item>  
    <parameter>$$ITEM_URL</parameter>  
    <coverart>$$ITEM_PICTUREFILENAME</coverart>  
    <display>$$ITEM_TRANSLATEDTITLE</display>  
    <offline></offline>  
    <information>  
      <name>$$ITEM_ORIGINALTITLE</name>  
      <title>$$ITEM_ORIGINALTITLE</title>  
      <sorttitle>$$ITEM_TRANSLATEDTITLE</sorttitle>  
      <director>$$ITEM_DIRECTOR</director>  
      <runtime>$$ITEM_LENGTH</runtime>  
      <plot>$$ITEM_DESCRIPTION</plot>  
      <actors>$$ITEM_ACTORS</actors>  
      <starimage>skin://buttons/stars/star$$ITEM_RATING.png</starimage>  
      <year>$$ITEM_YEAR</year>  
      <genre>$$ITEM_CATEGORY</genre>
```

```
<rating>$$ITEM_RATING/100</rating>
  <fanart>$$ITEM_MEDIA</fanart>
</information>
</item>
</database>
```

The top “sort” section defines how the database can be sorted. I don't normally touch this, but I have added things to the “item” section of the .xml file. I'm not going to define all the fields, as most are pretty self explanatory, but the following should be noted:

<parameter>\$\$ITEM_URL</parameter> - this takes the URL field and fills in the xlobby parameter of the location for a particular media. Then in xlobby you will want to execute your media player to play from %parameter% most times.

<starimage>skin://buttons/stars/star\$\$ITEM_RATING.png</starimage> - this is a bit of a confusing one as it takes the AMC rating field and uses that number to display a star rating image.

<fanart>\$\$ITEM_MEDIA</fanart> - this is the field for displaying fanart. Much like the <parameter> field above.

One field I have not defined, though could be useful for some is the <offline> field. If filled in you can use this to indicate which movies are offline. I don't use it as most my movies are online currently. If I was going to use it, I would base it on something like “Source” in the AMC catalog. I would make an entry there...something as simple as 'yes' (minus the quotes). Then in <offline> I would indicate the following:

```
<offline>$$ITEM_SOURCE</offline>
```

Then the xlobby database would indicate this by checking the Offline check box, and if you setup the category display correctly, it will show an offline graphic.

I hope this short description tutorial has helped some users understand how to take advantage of the AMC/Xant alternative to DVDProfiler. Not knocking DVDP, but I find the Ant solution much more viable.

The only gripe I have with keeping all media under on catalog and filtering it to different databases is that all the coverart is repeated for all databases, even if it is not used. So in the first screen capture, I show the movie Total Recall, and I have defined for databases to create. It will create an image for the mature database to use, but it will also create an image for the children database, recordedtv database and hidedf database. Though it never officially shows in those databases because the actual catalog entrance is only defined for the mature database...it files that take up additional space on the harddrive. To note, for the 160 somewhat movies I have entered, coverart takes up about 110Megs worth of space on the drive.

Have fun.