Making mods work with the in-game mod manager

FORUM THREAD FOR DISCUSSIONS HERE

I'm sure a lot of you modders have asked yourself how to get your (or your favorite) mod working from the get go.
I politely asked for guidance, and got some info on it.

Your mod need its own folder. The folder needs to be named like this: `yourmodidentifier_majorVersionNumber`
In this folder it's the same hierarchy as before, with a res folder, config (needed for multiple units), models, textures and so on.

Example
The mod identifier must be unique among all mods but can basically be anything that is as valid directory name. When choosing a mod identifier, keep in mind that this is also the folder name when the mod has been installed. Using a GUID will guarantee uniqueness but will be very hard to identify in the mod folder.

```
cfc0ff51-fe03-42b9-b831-68d189acebd1_1
```

When selecting a mod identifier it is good praxis to use an identifier that makes it easy to spot the mod.

```
nsb_stadlerflirt_mod_1
```

Keep in mind that this is an *identifier* for the mod and shouldn't be changed. This identifier may be used to check for updates etc.

When TFGM and TFMM converts older mods to the new system, they use the following algorithm to generate a mod identifier.
1. Concatenate author _ mod name _ major version
2. Convert to lowercase.
3. remove all characters that isn't a 0..9 and a..z

```
olahaldor_nsbstadlerflirt_1
```

If you make a major version of your mod, and it's become version 2.1, you should name the folder like this

```
olahaldor_nsbstadlerflirt_2
```

Preview image
To make the user experience better you should make a screenshot of your mod, so it's easier to see what mod the user is about to activate. This screenshot must be **320x180 pixels**, and saved as uncompressed TARGA (.tga) and be named **`image_00.tga`**

If you have more than one image they are just named **`image_01.tga`** **`image_02.tga`** etc... For the time being TF only use the **`image_00.tga`**
This image file(s) needs to be placed in the root of your mod folder. So it'll be something like this

Code

```
olahaldor_nsbstadlerflirt_1

  |-- image_00.tga
```

Documents
Documentation such as manuals or screenshots should be placed in the documents folder. This folder is optional and can be excluded if you have no additional files to include.

Code

```
olahaldor_nsbstadlerflirt_1
                                                    |--                         documents
  |-- image_00.tga
```

Mod configurations
If your mod use a configuration file, this file should be placed in the config folder located in the mod root. This folder is optional and can be excluded if you don't have a mod configuration.

Code

```
olahaldor_nsbstadlerflirt_1
                                                    |--                         documents
                                                    |--                         config
                                  |
  |
  |-- image_00.tga
```

Mod translation
All strings within _(...) are looked up in the strings.lua file. If no strings.lua is found or the string isn't defined inside it, the original string is used. Therefore it is recommended to write this string in English so as many users as possible can understand it if their own language isn't included.

Code

```
olahaldor_nsbstadlerflirt_1
                                                    |--                         documents
                                                    |--                         config
                                  |
  |

  |-- strings.lua      (optional but highly recommended)
```

Getting the mod to show up in the menus
In order to get the mod to appear in the list of possible mods to activate, you will need another file, **`info.lua`**. The file will be placed in the root folder of your mod.
Any unused variables can be removed completely.

Code

```
olahaldor_nsbstadlerflirt_1
                                                    |--                         documents
                                                    |--                         config
                                  |
  |

  |-- info.lua
```

Here's an example of what the **`info.lua`** file looks like in my NSB Stadler Flirt mod.

Code

```
function data()
    minorVersion = 61,
    severityAdd = "WARNING",    -- OPTIONAL "NONE", "WARNING" or "CRITICAL"
    severityRemove = "CRITICAL",    -- OPTIONAL "NONE", "WARNING" or "CRITICAL"
    name = "NSB Stadler Flirt",
    description = _("NSB Stadler Flirt"), -- OPTIONAL description (with translations)
    authors = {
        {
            name = "Ola Haldor Voll",
            role = "CREATOR",
            text = "Idea, Texture, Model",
            steamProfile = "76561197961659177",    -- OPTIONAL steam profile ID number
            tfnetId = 18378,
        },
    },
    tags = { "bus", "tram", "train", "steam", "diesel", "electric",
    },
    tfnetId = 0,
    minGameVersion = 10,
    dependencies = { },
} end
```

Alles anzeigen

Not all of the variables are used or even set in stone yet.
Train Fever only use the following variables.

minorVersion

This is the fraction part of the mod's version number.
A new version that doesn't break saved games should increase the minor version because it will *replace* the previous mod with the same *major* version.
This variable is mandatory and must be included.

Example 1:
Your mod is v2.3 and you decide to do a minor update that won't break game saves. The major version, the number at the end of your mod folder, stays the same; 2
The `minorVersion` number is incremented to 4 resulting in mod version 2.4

Example 2:
Your mod is v2.3 and you decide to do a major update that will break game saves. The major version, the number at the end of your mod folder, increments to 3
The `minorVersion` number is reset to 0 resulting in mod version 3.0

This will allow several versions of the same mod to co-exists so game saves prior to the major changes still can load (using the older version).

severityAdd

This tells Train Fever the impact of adding this mod to a saved game. There are currently 3 levels.
The variable is optional and can be excluded.

"NONE"
This mod can be added without any side effects.

"WARNING"
There may side effects but the game shouldn't crash.

"CRITICAL"
There is a high risk that the saved game will crash or be unplayable.

severityRemove
This tells Train Fever the impact of removing this mod from a saved game. There are currently 3 levels.
The variable is optional and can be excluded.

"NONE"
This mod can be removed without any side effects.

"WARNING"
There may side effects but the game shouldn't crash if removed.

"CRITICAL"
There is a high risk that the saved game will crash or be unplayable if removed.

name
The name of the mod, not to be confused with the mod identifier. The name is what you see in Train Fever's internal mod manager, TFGM and TFMM.
The name can be localized with the **strings.lua** translation file.
The variable is optional and can be excluded.

description
The mod's description. This is shown in Train Fever's internal mod manager, TFGM and TFMM.
The name can be localized with the **strings.lua** translation file.
The variable is optional and can be excluded.

minGameVersion
This is the minimum Train Fever version this mod requires to run. In practice, set this to the Train Fever version you tested the mod against.
The variable is optional and can be excluded.

Variables used by TFGM
These additional variables are used by TFGM to extend the mod information.

tags

This is a table with tags so the mod can be categorized/grouped/sorted etc.
The tag name itself serves as the tag identifier and should therefore be in English, preferable one word.

Example:

```
tags = { "station", "building", "passenger", "MyTag" }
```

TFGM have the capability to localize tags so you can search for a tag in any of the localized tag versions and still find it. A list of built in tag definitions are shown in gray while user defined tags are shown in white to indicate that the tag likely don't have localization.
There is no need to put the authors or mod name as a tag, these are included automatically in TFGM searches.

Built in tag definitions in TFGM.

Age	Vehicle ageing
Building	Generic building
Bus	A bus model for passenger transport
Cost	Details concerning costs
Decoration	Decoration model without any practical use
Depot	Depot model
Diesel	Diesel Engine
Electric	Electric engine
Engine	Engine as in train engine
Goods	Goods components
HUD	Head UP Display elements in the 3D view, icons for trains, stops, trucks, depots etc.
Industry	Industry chains
Maintenance	Details concerning maintenance
Music	Background music in game and menus
Name	In game name related
Package	A package is an archived mod with several mods/changes
Passenger	Passenger related
Price	Alteration of prices
Railcar	A rail carriage in general
Script	A file containing Lua code
Signal	A signal model for controlling traffic
Sound	A sound effect such as engine sounds, door sounds, click sounds etc.
Station	Station model
Steam	Steam Engine

Street	Street or road related
Texture	A texture for a 3D model
Time	Alteration of timeline or ageing
Tool	Tools and utilities for Train Fever
Town	A town related in general
Tram	Tram model
Train	A train in general
Truck	Truck model
UI	User Interface elements such as menu buttons
Vehicle	A vehicle in general
Waggon	Waggon model

authors

This is a table with one or more authors to the mod. An author can have a role indicating his contribution to the mod.

Example with 3 author:

Code

```
authors                                 =                                       {
                    {           name
                                                                                        stea
                                                text
  },
                                    {                   name
                                                                                        stea
  },
                        {           name
                                                                        text
                                                                                        stea
  }
}
```

Alles anzeigen

name

The name of the author, displayed on the author card and in list view.

steamProfile

This is the numerical Steam profile ID. You can retrieve it from TFGM's Preferences dialog.

The ID is used to fetch your Steam avatar image and link to your Steam Profile Page.

role
There are currently 4 roles.

"CREATOR"
This is a lead creator of the mod.
The ***text*** field have at this point no meaning and can be freely used. You can put it inside a _(...) for translation.

"CO_CREATOR"
This is a Co-Creator contributing to the mod.
The ***text*** variable specifies what he/she contributed with. You can put it inside a _(...) for translation.

"BASED_ON"
This mod was based on the work of this author.
The ***text*** variable specifies the mod(s) this mod was based on.

"TESTER"
This author did mod testing.
The ***text*** variable specifies what was tested. For example "Windows 7", "Linux", "Mac" etc...

"TRANSLATOR"
This creator contributed with a localization (translation) of the mod.
The ***text*** variable specifies what language he/she contributed with.
The language is specified with it's ISO639-1 language code (not to be confused with a country code).

text
This field has different meaning depending on the role, see each role for an explanation.

tfnetId
This might have been a typo and should probably be the tfnet_author_id found in tfmm.ini and should probably be named/renamed to tfnetAuthorId
This isn't at this point used by TFGM at all.

Other variables not used by Train Fever or TFGM (TFMM?)
These variables are not used by TFGM or Train Fever at the moment. I'm not even sure TFMM use them.

`dependencies`
A list of mods this mods depends on to run properly. I'm not sure if the latest TFMM uses it either.

`url`
A fully qualified URL to the mod's official home page. Not

The strings.lus would look something like this in English and Google translated to German and Swedish:

Code

```
function data() return {
    en
    ['NSB Flirt 3 (Fast Innovative Regional Train) diesel electric multiple unit railcar'..
    '\n'..
    ['I made this'
    },
    de
    '\n'..
    ['I made this' ] = 'Ich h
    },
    sv
    '\n'..
    'Från och med februari 2015, har 1,094 enheter sålts.',
    ['I made this' ] =
  }
} end
```

Alles anzeigen

In the end, here's what it will look like in the Train Fever mod activation. Notice how the major and minor version names appear next to the **`name`** tag from the **`info.lua`** file while the **`description`** appears below the preview image.
[Blockierte Grafik: http://puu.sh/ggdaU/1662bcfb8e.jpg]

I hope this will get you going to update your mods!