



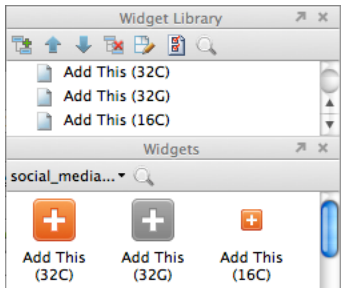
Axure Widget Library Best Practices Guide

http://axureland.com/axure_blog/entry/axure_widget_library_best_practices

From the Axureworld 2011 presentation
The Wonderful World of Widgets
by Ari Feldman and Panayiotis Karabetis.

Library Structure

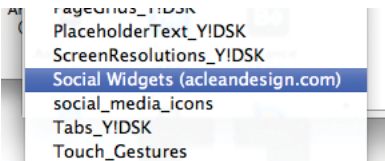
The way widgets are listed from top to bottom in the Widgets Library Pane is how they're displayed left to right in the Widgets Pane.



Place related items (e.g. headers, forms, buttons) together and move more frequently-used widgets to the top of the Widget Library Pane.

Library Naming Conventions

~33 characters display in the Widgets Pane selection drop-down:



~12 characters, followed by an ellipsis (...), are displayed in the Widgets Pane after a library is selected from the drop-down:

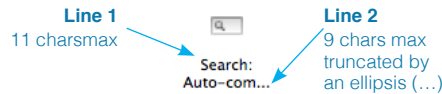


Library Size

For usability and performance reasons, limit your libraries to about 120 widgets.

Widget Naming Conventions

Axure displays two lines for each widget displayed in the Widget Library pane:



NOTE: These are rough numbers and depend on the width of each character used (e.g. the letter x takes up more horizontal space than the letter i).

Consider using a naming scheme to get around character limitations and ensure your widgets are recognizable and usable:

`<object_name>:<dimensions><version_num>`

`<object_name>` is the widget's name: "Dialog" or "Text Field," etc. (up to 9 chars)

`<dimensions>` is the size of the widget in pixels: "300x250" (up to 7 chars)

`<version_num>` is an optional version number or reference ID (up to 3 chars)

NOTE: If your Widget Library is part of a standardized UI library, you should name your widgets to match any CSS styles used and ignore these recommendations.

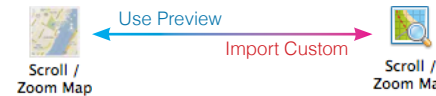
Custom Icons

Axure automatically generates a thumbnail for each widget in your library based on what you draw in the Design Pane.

Here's the "Scroll / Zoom Map" from Ari Feldman's WidgetLib as seen in Axure's Design Pane:



Below is the difference between Axure's auto-generated thumbnails (Use Preview) versus using your own icon (Import Custom):



The custom icon is sharp, high-contrast, and easily recognizable when compared to Axure's.

Some more tips:

- Avoid photo-realistic images!
- Use metaphorically-correct images for your icons (visit iconfinder.net)
- Import icons that are 32x32 pixels and let Axure resize them to 28x28.
- Use high contrast colors for your icons. This will help users distinguish between many different widgets when working with a large Widget Library.

Testing & Debugging



Axure generates robust cross-platform HTML and JavaScript, but it's not full-proof. Test your widgets in at least two commonly-used browsers to see if they behave the same. Remember to clear your browser cache each time you test your widgets for consistent results!

Documentation

Widget Notes Pane: for each widget, add a 1–5 line description and use **bold**, *italic*, underline, and **colors** to emphasize it. Add reference URLs using <http://> and describe any variables used to help readers understand how your widget functions.

Tooltips: for each widget, fill out the Tooltip area within its Widget Properties dialogue window explaining how to use the widget.

Distribution

Package your widget library in a ZIP file since it's compatible with Mac and PC and include:

- installation instructions
- widget descriptions (readme.txt)
- license and copyright information
- a sample .RP file for demonstration