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Tips and Tricks C#

USING CUSTOM DOMAINS WHEN DEVELOPING IN VISUAL STUDIO USING IIS EXPRESS



A classic problem when building asp.net applications in visual studio and IIS Express is how to configure it so you can use a custom domain name, in case the default "localhost:port" doesn't suit you. I might be getting old, but every time I need to do this, I spend time looking it up in multiple places and trying to remember what I did last time - so this blog post is a simple guide on how to do it - both for my own future benefit and perhaps yours.

Step 1: Make sure you have the domain set up in your hosts file

Simply locate the file at `C:\Windows\System32\drivers\etc\hosts`, and edit it.

Add a row in the bottom that for example could look like this:
`127.0.0.1 local.codeart.dk`

This will override DNS settings and always look on the local machine for "local.codeart.dk".

Step 2: Bind domain to site in IISExpress

To do this you need to locate the "applicationhost.config" file. After VS2015 it's located in `[solutiondir]\.vs\config\applicationhost.config`. (If you are working at a museum and use a visual studio version before 2015, you can find the file in `MyDocuments/IISExpress/config`, but you should also remember to first put coal in your steam engine to power on your computer).

In this file, you'll want to find the path to site/bindings and add a binding like this:
`<binding protocol="http" bindingInformation="*:52494:local.codeart.dk" />`

Where '52494' would be the port number. Note that I'm using HTTP, as HTTPS would require you to setup a local certificate for it. The IISExpress default certificate only works for localhost.

Step 3: Update your Project file

You can either do this manually in the file, or through project settings.

Apply server settings to all users (store in project file)

IIS Express Bitness: Default

Project Url:

Set the project URL to the correct domain.

With this, you should be ready to hit run and it should all work out :-)

Alternate approach: use IIS

You can of course also just setup your local IIS - it's fast and easy as well. IISExpress is just the lazy way.

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