Tabbed interface with Pivot animation for Windows Phone

This article explains how to create a tabbed interface with a pivot-style animation. This sort of UI has been used in the official Twitter app and 6tag Instagram client on Windows Phone.

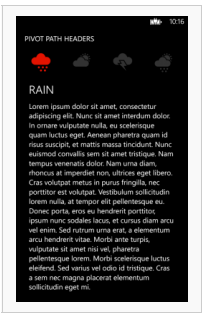
22 Sep 2013

Introduction

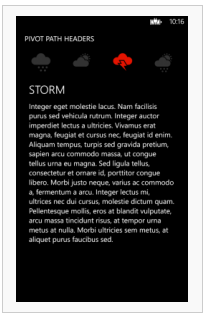
The official Twitter app on Windows Phone uses an uncommon interface for Windows Phone - effectively a "tabbed" control but with pivot-like animation for displaying the selected content.

The behaviour of the Twitter app suggests this is a normal pivot control, but 2 things are different from the standard implementation. Firstly, all the icons stay in view, even while switching through each pivot content (normally the headers will flow outside the boundary of the normal page). Secondly, the use of such icons as headers is also not common.

This article explains how to create this sort of user interface using path controls for its headers. These path controls contain XAML data to represent the "tab icon" images. The screenshots below show how this looks (there is also a video below).



pivot 1



pivot 3

Implementation

Create a new windows phone app and in the **MainPage.xaml** add a `ListBox` called `ImageBar`. This `ImageBar` will host our 4 icons which will act as our pivot headers. Each icon is actually a custom `PathControl` (more on this below) that contains XAML data representing the image.

We are using a `ListBox` for this because it has all the necessary event handling and actions to select an item and automatically deselecting all other items. This will also help in setting a selected colour.

Note: To get nice looking icons, just download Metro Studio from Syncfusion Open the program, search for a nice icon and copy paste the generated XAML data into your windows phone project.

```
<ListBox x:Name="ImageBar"
            Grid.Row="0"
            ScrollViewer.VerticalScrollBarVisibility="Disabled"
            ItemContainerStyle="{StaticResource ListBoxItemStyle}"
            SelectedIndex="{Binding SelectedIndex, ElementName=ContentPivot,
Mode=TwoWay}">
    <ListBox.ItemsPanel>
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            <customcontrols:SplitPanel />
        </ItemsPanelTemplate>
    </ListBox.ItemsPanel>
    <ListBoxItem>
        <customcontrols:PathControl Content="M37.786324,45.467003C39.394405,45.467003
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37.786324,51.299996 36.178245,51.299996 34.869808,49.994999 34.869808,48.383999
34.869808,46.774002 36.178245,45.467003 37.786324,45.467003z
M26.671389,45.467003C28.282196,45.467003 29.582848,46.774002 29.582848,48.383999
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23.749926,49.994999 23.749926,48.383999 23.749926,46.774002 25.060581,45.467003
26.671389,45.467003z M42.511345,36.764008C44.122189,36.764008 45.432873,38.069786
45.432873,39.680516 45.432873,41.291245 44.122189,42.597023 42.511345,42.597023
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20.771337,36.764008z M26.491566,0C32.521801,8.3675695E-07 37.622181,4.5700085
39.312214,10.863009 40.262218,10.601992 41.252262,10.450991 42.272339,10.450991
48.382656,10.450991 53.333004,15.399997 53.333004,21.506993 53.333004,25.436009
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```


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16.789219,10.773001 21.976753,10.773001z M45.672386,7.174134C46.223133,7.1814017
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/>
    </ListBoxItem>
</ListBox>
```

After that, also add a `Pivot1` control to the page, but don't add a `HeaderTemplate`! We don't need one, because our `ImageBar` list box will act as one. We need as many `PivotItems` as `ImageBar` images, because each image represents one `PivotItem`.

```
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                Grid.Row="1"
                Margin="0,-12,0,0">
    <controls:PivotItem>
        <StackPanel>
            <TextBlock Text="RAIN" Style="{StaticResource PhoneTextTitle2Style}"
FontWeight="Bold"/>
            <RichTextBox Margin="0,12,0,0">
                <Paragraph>
                    <Run>
                        Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nunc
sit amet interdum dolor. In ornare vulputate nulla, eu scelerisque quam luctus eget.
Aenean pharetra quam id risus suscipit, et mattis massa tincidunt. Nunc euismod
convallis sem sit amet tristique. Nam tempus venenatis dolor. Nam urna diam, rhoncus at
imperdiet non, ultrices eget libero. Cras volutpat metus in purus fringilla, nec
porttitor est volutpat. Vestibulum sollicitudin lorem nulla, at tempor elit pellentesque
eu. Donec porta, eros eu hendrerit porttitor, ipsum nunc sodales lacus, et cursus diam
arcu vel enim. Sed rutrum urna erat, a elementum arcu hendrerit vitae. Morbi ante
turpis, vulputate sit amet nisi vel, pharetra pellentesque lorem. Morbi scelerisque
luctus eleifend. Sed varius vel odio id tristique. Cras a sem nec magna placerat
elementum sollicitudin eget mi.
                    </Run>
                </Paragraph>
            </RichTextBox>
        </StackPanel>
    </controls:PivotItem>
```


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```
    <controls:PivotItem>
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            <TextBlock Text="CLOUDY" Style="{StaticResource PhoneTextTitle2Style}"
FontWeight="Bold"/>
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                        Sed bibendum vehicula quam. Mauris id massa non erat vehicula
feugiat id eget nibh. Donec quis neque in lorem pellentesque feugiat at ac tortor.
Suspendisse pulvinar justo et fermentum hendrerit. Morbi sed dolor at mauris tempus
blandit eget non neque. Maecenas lobortis varius diam, ut pharetra mi vestibulum eu.
Vivamus ornare ut est nec dapibus. Duis ultrices in dui sit amet luctus. Pellentesque
pretium, mauris vel porta vehicula, ipsum felis ullamcorper nibh, sed fermentum nibh
libero a erat. In volutpat lorem cursus risus hendrerit, et imperdiet lorem consectetur.
Mauris eu urna in leo tempus convallis et cursus neque. Donec at lacinia eros, ac
gravida magna. Praesent enim mauris, tempor nec pharetra at, lobortis sed nulla.
                    </Run>
                </Paragraph>
            </RichTextBox>
        </StackPanel>
    </controls:PivotItem>
    <controls:PivotItem>
        <StackPanel>
            <TextBlock Text="STORM" Style="{StaticResource PhoneTextTitle2Style}"
FontWeight="Bold"/>
            <RichTextBox Margin="0,12,0,0">
                <Paragraph>
                    <Run>
                        Integer eget molestie lacus. Nam facilisis purus sed vehicula
rutrum. Integer auctor imperdiet lectus a ultricies. Vivamus erat magna, feugiat et
cursus nec, feugiat id enim. Aliquam tempus, turpis sed gravida pretium, sapien arcu
commodo massa, ut congue tellus urna eu magna. Sed ligula tellus, consectetur et ornare
id, porttitor congue libero. Morbi justo neque, varius ac commodo a, fermentum a arcu.
Integer lectus mi, ultrices nec dui cursus, molestie dictum quam. Pellentesque mollis,
eros at blandit vulputate, arcu massa tincidunt risus, at tempor urna metus at nulla.
Morbi ultricies sem metus, at aliquet purus faucibus sed.
                    </Run>
                </Paragraph>
            </RichTextBox>
        </StackPanel>
    </controls:PivotItem>
    <controls:PivotItem>
        <StackPanel>
            <TextBlock Text="DRIZZLE" Style="{StaticResource PhoneTextTitle2Style}"
FontWeight="Bold"/>
            <RichTextBox Margin="0,12,0,0">
                <Paragraph>
                    <Run>
                        Phasellus molestie volutpat ante pulvinar convallis. Suspendisse
tincidunt ante quis arcu dignissim, nec condimentum nisi ultrices. Nulla ac arcu
ultrices ipsum euismod pretium. Cras euismod tristique leo volutpat consequat. Maecenas
porta aliquet sodales. Nulla lacinia sed lectus id interdum. Quisque mauris sem, commodo
eu ultricies eget, mollis id velit. Donec non leo in justo ultrices congue. Etiam
mattis, justo sit amet feugiat eleifend, turpis libero tempus risus, sit amet
pellentesque nisl diam sit amet elit. Nulla sit amet nunc eu turpis vehicula fermentum.
                    </Run>
                </Paragraph>
            </RichTextBox>
        </StackPanel>
    </controls:PivotItem>
</controls:Pivot>
```

Note: Important thing to note is the `SelectedIndex` property on the `ImageBar` control! It's bound to the `SelectedIndex` of the `Pivot` control in 2 way mode. By doing this, these 2 controls their `SelectedIndex` will stay in sync!

What we now need to do, is making the icons change colour when you select one from the `ImageBar`. This is done by giving the `ListBox` an `ItemContainerStyle` in which we are going to use the visual states of the `ListBox` to set the colour when an item is selected. In our example we use the `PhoneAccentColor` for the selected state and `PhoneInactiveColor` for the unselected state.

```
<Style x:Key="ListBoxItemStyle" TargetType="ListBoxItem">
    <Setter Property="Background" Value="Transparent"/>
    <Setter Property="BorderThickness" Value="0"/>
    <Setter Property="BorderBrush" Value="Transparent"/>
    <Setter Property="Padding" Value="0"/>
    <Setter Property="HorizontalContentAlignment" Value="Center"/>
    <Setter Property="VerticalContentAlignment" Value="Top"/>
    <Setter Property="Template">
        <Setter.Value>
            <ControlTemplate TargetType="ListBoxItem">
                <Border x:Name="LayoutRoot" BorderBrush="{TemplateBinding BorderBrush}"
BorderThickness="{TemplateBinding BorderThickness}" Background="{TemplateBinding
Background}" HorizontalAlignment="{TemplateBinding HorizontalAlignment}"
VerticalAlignment="{TemplateBinding VerticalAlignment}">
                    <VisualStateManager.VisualStateGroups>
                        <VisualStateGroup x:Name="CommonStates">
                            <VisualState x:Name="Normal"/>
                            <VisualState x:Name="MouseOver"/>
                        </VisualStateGroup>
                        <VisualStateGroup x:Name="SelectionStates">
                            <VisualState x:Name="Unselected">
                                <Storyboard>
                                    <ColorAnimation Duration="0" To="{StaticResource
PhoneInactiveColor}"
Storyboard.TargetProperty="(Control.Background).(SolidColorBrush.Color)"
Storyboard.TargetName="ContentContainer" d:IsOptimized="True"/>
                                    <ColorAnimation Duration="0" To="{StaticResource
PhoneInactiveColor}"
Storyboard.TargetProperty="(Control.Foreground).(SolidColorBrush.Color)"
Storyboard.TargetName="ContentContainer" d:IsOptimized="True"/>
                                </Storyboard>
                            </VisualState>
                            <VisualState x:Name="Selected">
                                <Storyboard>
                                    <ColorAnimation Duration="0" To="{StaticResource
PhoneAccentColor}"
Storyboard.TargetProperty="(Control.Foreground).(SolidColorBrush.Color)"
Storyboard.TargetName="ContentContainer" d:IsOptimized="True"/>
                                </Storyboard>
                            </VisualState>
                            <VisualState x:Name="SelectedUnfocused">
                                <Storyboard>
                                    <ColorAnimation Duration="0" To="{StaticResource
PhoneAccentColor}"
Storyboard.TargetProperty="(Control.Foreground).(SolidColorBrush.Color)"
Storyboard.TargetName="ContentContainer" d:IsOptimized="True"/>
                                </Storyboard>
                            </VisualState>
                        </VisualStateGroup>
                    </VisualStateManager.VisualStateGroups>
                    <ContentControl x:Name="ContentContainer"
ContentTemplate="{TemplateBinding ContentTemplate}" Content="{TemplateBinding Content}"
```


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```
Foreground="#FF1BA1E2" HorizontalAlignment="{TemplateBinding
HorizontalContentAlignment}" Margin="{TemplateBinding Padding}"
VerticalAlignment="{TemplateBinding VerticalContentAlignment}" Background="Black"
BorderBrush="Black"/>
                </Border>
            </ControlTemplate>
        </Setter.Value>
    </Setter>
</Style>
```

When you try this in your own application, you will notice that a specific element is missing in the XAML mentioned above. This is the custom control called `PathControl`. It's actually a `ContentTemplate` wrapper around a Path control, but this needed to allow the use of the `Foreground` property defined in the `ListBoxItemStyle`. Because by default the `Path` control doesn't have a `Foreground` property, but uses the `Fill` property to set it's colour. With this custom `PathControl` we transfer the value of the `Foreground` property to the `Fill` property so that all styling is working. We do a similar transfer for the `Content` property, this needs to be moved to the `Data` property of the actual `Path` control.

```
public class PathControl : ContentControl
{
    public PathControl()
    {
        DefaultStyleKey = typeof(PathControl);
    }
}
```

```
<Style TargetType="controls:PathControl">
    <Setter Property="Template">
        <Setter.Value>
            <ControlTemplate TargetType="controls:PathControl">
                <Grid>
                    <Path Data="{TemplateBinding Content}"
                          Fill="{TemplateBinding Foreground}"/>
                </Grid>
            </ControlTemplate>
        </Setter.Value>
    </Setter>
</Style>
```

But still, when you would run this, each icon will stick to the next, we need to divide them evenly! You could calculate this and add margins… But in our example we again use a special user control. This one is derived from Panel, called `SplitPanel` and we use this as `ItemsPanelTemplate` on the `ListBox`. It will do the width calculation and add the needed space so that each listbox item takes up equally space along the page.

```
public class SplitPanel : Panel
{
    protected override Size MeasureOverride(Size availableSize)
    {
        // the final measure size is the available size for the width, and the maximum
        // desired size of our children for the height
        Size finalSize = new Size { Width = availableSize.Width };

        if (this.Children.Count != 0)
            availableSize.Width /= (double)this.Children.Count;

        foreach (var current in this.Children)
        {
            current.Measure(availableSize);

            Size desiredSize = current.DesiredSize;
            finalSize.Height = Math.Max(finalSize.Height, desiredSize.Height);
        }

        // make sure it will works in design time mode
        if (double.IsPositiveInfinity(finalSize.Height) ||
double.IsPositiveInfinity(finalSize.Width))
            return Size.Empty;

        return finalSize;
    }

    protected override Size ArrangeOverride(Size arrangeSize)
    {
        Rect finalRect = new Rect(new Point(), arrangeSize);
        double width = arrangeSize.Width / this.Children.Count;

        foreach (var child in this.Children)
        {
            finalRect.Height = Math.Max(arrangeSize.Height, child.DesiredSize.Height);
            finalRect.Width = width;

            child.Arrange(finalRect);

            // move each child by the width increment
            finalRect.X += width;
        }

        return arrangeSize;
    }
}
```

With all this in place you should have a nice looking twitter mimicking app!

Video demo

The media player is loading...

Downloads

A complete working solution can be downloaded here: File:PivotWithPathControl.zip

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