



Pro

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Automator Workflow Techniques

Creating a Scheduled Automator Workflow

By Ben Waldie

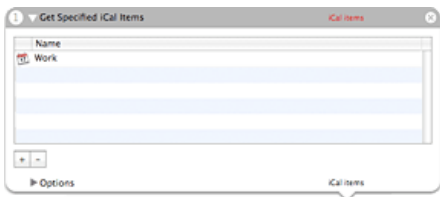
Automator workflows are a great way to speed up those time-consuming and repetitive manual processes on your Mac. But perhaps it would be even more efficient if you could perform some of those tasks outside of the normal workday. Do you know that you can schedule Automator workflows to run when you are away from your desk?

The following steps will walk you through the process of creating an Automator workflow, which will be saved as an iCal alarm that will be triggered in the middle of the night, allowing you to accomplish tasks even when your office is closed. This particular workflow will be scheduled to run at midnight, and it will generate a summary of the new day's iCal events in TextEdit, ready for your review first thing in the morning.

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Step 1: Launch Automator, located in the Applications folder, and create a new workflow window.

Step 2: Select the iCal category, located in the Library list in Automator. Select the Get Specified iCal Items action in the Action list and drag it into the workflow area on the right side of the Automator window. Click the + button to specify the calendar or calendars from which you would like to retrieve events.



Step 3: Locate and select the Event Summary action in the iCal category, and drag it into the workflow area. Configure the action to retrieve events for Today.

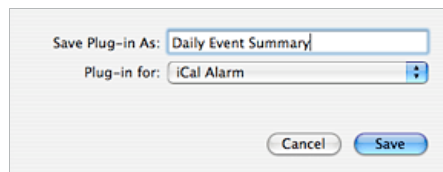


Step 4: Locate and select the New TextEdit Document action in the TextEdit category, and drag it into the workflow area.

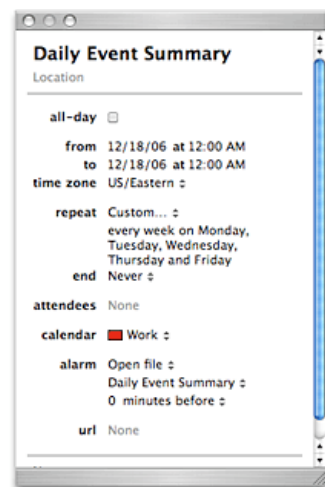


Step 5: Select Save as Plug-in... from the File menu in Automator.

Step 6: Name the plug-in Daily Event Summary, and choose iCal Alarm from the Plug-in for popup. Click the Save button.



Step 7: iCal will be brought to the front, and a new event will be created for the workflow. Set the start time for the new event to 12:00 AM. Configure the event to repeat every weekday.

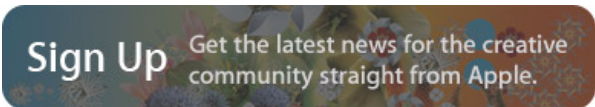


Once the event has been configured, the workflow will run every night at midnight and a summary of all

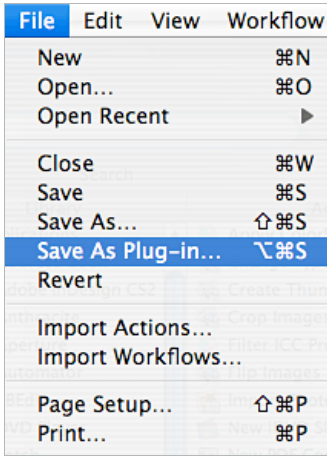
- ### Downloads and Useful Links
- Download the workflow described here
 - Learn more about Automator
 - Download more Actions and Workflows
 - Learn about AppleScript
 - Download Automator Loop Utility
 - TECSoft Automator Workshop

Tip

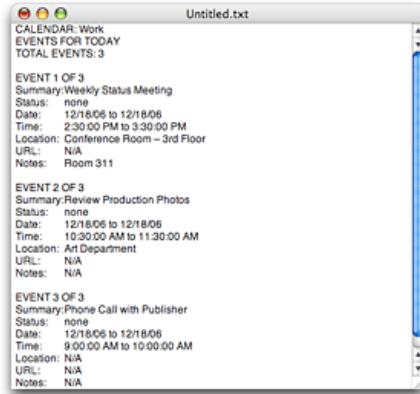
Using the [Automator Loop Utility](#), available from [Automator.us](#), it's possible to configure an Automator workflow to run on a repeating schedule, even once every minute!



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iCal events for the new day will be generated for you to review in the morning.



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