

XLS PADLOCK

XLS Padlock FastSpring Subscription Kit

Sell Excel workbooks with FastSpring subscriptions

Version 2026.0

G.D.G. Software

www.xlspadlock.com

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Overview

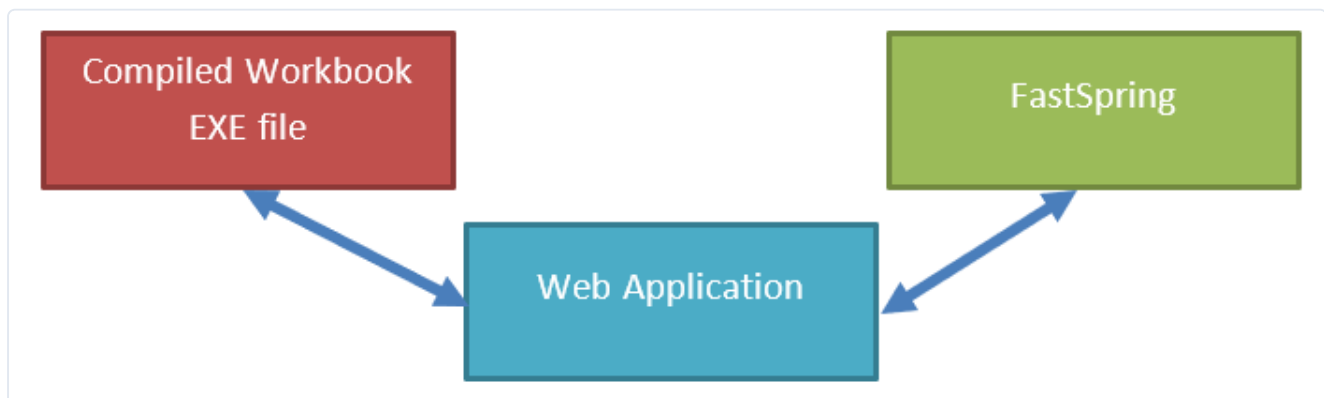
Online activation and validation features of XLS Padlock let you **control user access to your Excel workbooks remotely**. For instance, you can sell [subscriptions for your](#) Excel spreadsheets and block access of customers if their subscription expired for non payment.

To manage subscriptions, we chose [FastSpring](#), an ecommerce partner of choice for selling software online. This FS subscription kit requires an active FastSpring account.

The workbook applications compiled with XLS Padlock can communicate with a web application powered by this subscription kit. The application uses FastSpring API to manage customer settings and subscription data.

The following guide contains instructions to set up the web application on your server and link it to your Excel workbooks. After that, online activation and optionally validation will be functional. You will be able to manage access of your customers directly from the [FastSpring Dashboard](#).

Starting with XLS Padlock 2026, the kit supports a new **signed activation protocol** (JSON exchanges with Ed25519 response signing), detected automatically on each request and **backward-compatible** with workbooks packed by earlier versions. See [The 2026 activation protocol](#) for what changes and how to enable it.



Get started

1. Verify your server meets the [Server requirements](#).
2. [Step 1: obtain FastSpring API credentials](#) from your FastSpring account.
3. [Copy the files to your server](#), then set the [Base URL for activation](#) and [Set up local encryption key](#).
4. Edit [Step 3: configure config.ini](#) with your XLS Padlock user ID and FastSpring API credentials.
5. [Step 4: associate your compiled workbook EXE files](#), [Step 5: configure the Excel workbook for subscriptions](#), and [Step 6: let FastSpring generate activation tokens](#).

Topics

Installation

- [Server requirements](#)
- [The 2026 activation protocol](#)
- [Step 1: obtain FastSpring API credentials](#)
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Subscriptions

- [Step 4: associate your compiled workbook EXE files](#)
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Server requirements

The web application is based on the Fat-Free Framework (<https://fatfreeframework.com>) so they share the same server requirements: please refer to <https://fatfreeframework.com/3.9/system-requirements>

The following requirements are generally provided by standard web hosting companies:

- Apache. If you use NGINX, you must configure it so that the redirection rules defined in the `.htaccess` are handled
- PHP 8.2 or greater
- PHP CURL extension enabled
- PHP **sodium** extension (libsodium) enabled - bundled with PHP 7.2 and later, including all PHP 8.x - required for the 2026 Ed25519 response signing (see [The 2026 activation protocol](#))
- `mod_rewrite` and `mod_headers` enabled (Apache)
- The **inc/lib** subfolder must be writable by the web-server user. The kit stores the token encryption key (`validationkey.txt`) there and, at activation time, a small first-validation cache (`activation_cache.json`). Both stay protected by the shipped `.htaccess` / `web.config` rules
- a [valid FastSpring account](#)

The 2026 activation protocol

Starting with **XLS Padlock 2026.0**, compiled workbooks use a new activation protocol based on **JSON request/response envelopes with mandatory Ed25519 signature verification**. The FS Subscription kit **auto-detects the protocol on each request**, so workbooks packed in the legacy *"Compatibility mode for pre-2026 activation kits"* keep working unchanged (plain-text responses, no signature).

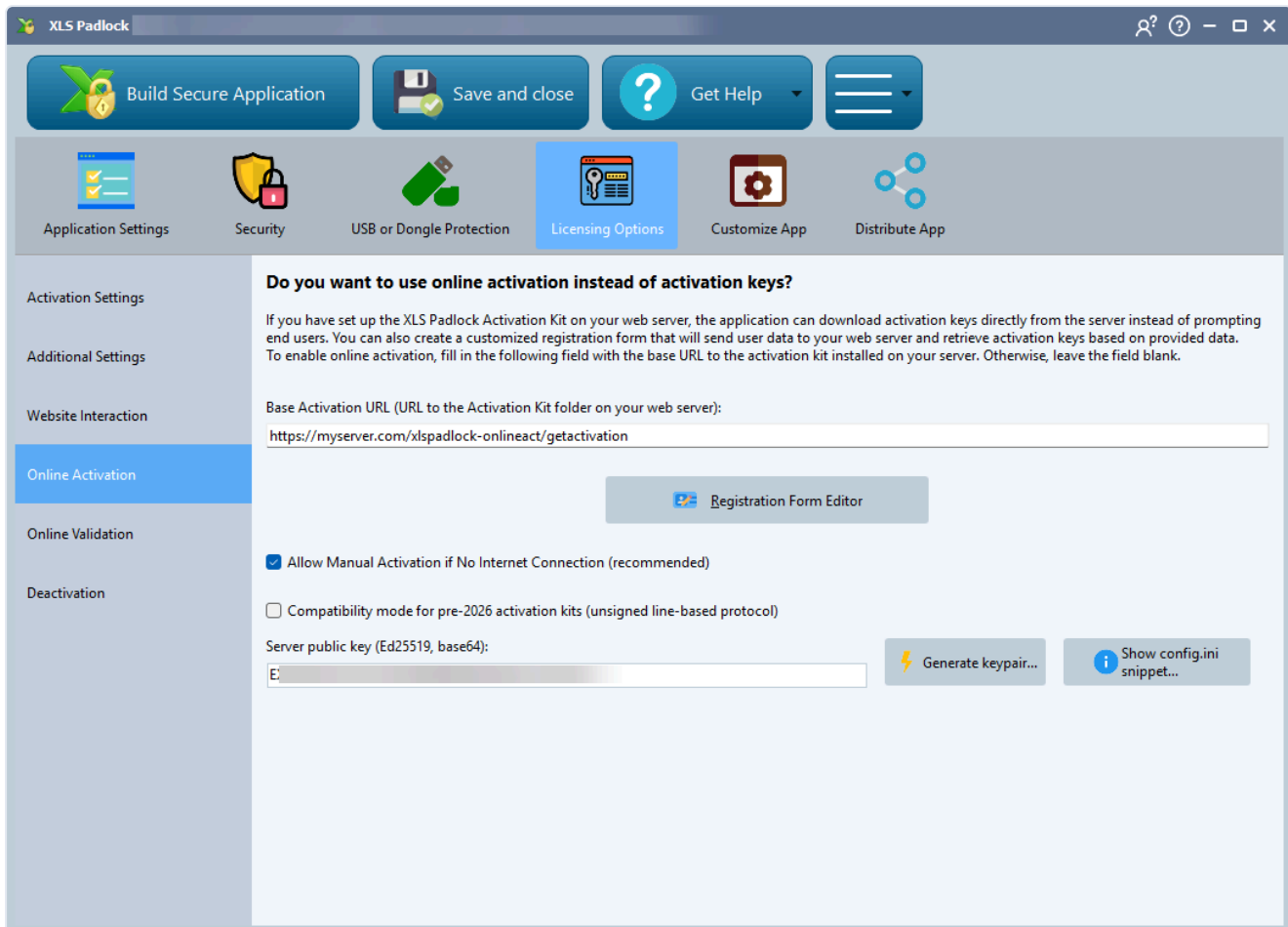
This protocol applies to activation, validation and deactivation alike.

One Ed25519 keypair per product

Because this kit serves **multiple workbooks** (one entry per product in **workbooks.json**, see [Step 4](#)), you manage **one Ed25519 keypair per product**. The private (secret) key goes into that product's new **xlspadlocksignkey** field in **workbooks.json**; the matching public key is embedded in the compiled workbook by XLS Padlock.

To enable the 2026 protocol for a product:

1. In the XLS Padlock Designer, open the **Activation Keys / Online Activation** page for that workbook.
2. **Uncheck** *"Compatibility mode for pre-2026 activation kits"*.
3. Click **"Generate keypair..."**. The public key auto-fills in the Designer; copy the displayed **private (secret) key** into that product's **xlspadlocksignkey** field in **workbooks.json**.
4. **Re-pack** the protected workbook.



IMPORTANT

In 2026 mode, the legacy security GUID (**xlspadlockprivatekey**) is **not used** for that product: the Ed25519 public key becomes the customer discriminator in the activation code (`cod`) calculation. Keep **xlspadlockprivatekey** only for products still packed in legacy compatibility mode. Both fields may coexist across products in the same `workbooks.json` - fill the one that matches how each workbook was packed.

The **Server Public Key** field on the Online Activation page is read-only: it is filled automatically when you click "**Generate keypair...**", so the keypair must be created from the Designer. Copy the displayed **private (secret) key** into that product's **xlspadlocksignkey** field in **workbooks.json**.

IMPORTANT

Keep the private keys secret. Anyone holding a product's private key can forge activation responses for that workbook's customers. Treat it like an SSL private key: never commit, email, or paste it into chat. Because `workbooks.json` now contains these secrets, it **must not be web-readable** (the shipped `.htaccess` denies `*.json`; on IIS or NGINX, add an equivalent rule). If a key leaks, generate a new keypair, update `workbooks.json`, and re-pack the workbook with the new public key.

Requirements

The 2026 protocol needs the PHP **sodium** extension (libsodium) on your server - bundled with PHP 7.2 and later, including all PHP 8.x. See [Server requirements for the FS Subscription kit](#). If

xlspadlocksignkey is left empty while a workbook sends a 2026 JSON request, the kit returns a misconfiguration error.

Technical support and license

Do not hesitate to send us your feedback, to report bugs or to share your modifications with us:

info@xlspadlock.com

This FS Subscription kit is provided "AS IS" WITHOUT WARRANTY OF ANY KIND, WHETHER EXPRESS, IMPLIED, OR STATUTORY, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, AND NON-INFRINGEMENT. THE ENTIRE RISK AS TO THE QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE OF THIS PRODUCT IS WITH YOU. SHOULD THIS PRODUCT PROVE DEFECTIVE, YOU ASSUME THE COST OF ALL NECESSARY SERVICING, REPAIR, OR CORRECTION.

By installing and using this FS Subscription kit, you agree to be bound by the license terms available from the LICENSE file in the folder named "**xlspadlock-fskit**".

Please note that, depending on your requests, we and/or FastSpring will not provide you with free technical support for this FS Subscription kit. You should have some server knowledge at least to deal with this kit.

This kit is not endorsed by FastSpring. Do not ask them for support.

Step 1: FastSpring API credentials

The web application uses RESTful to communicate with FastSpring. Thus, FastSpring API Credentials are required.

→ **Follow instructions from this page to obtain the necessary credentials:**

[<https://fastspring.com/docs/integrations/#api>]

After following these instructions, please keep the username and password in a safe place.

Here is a screenshot of the API Credentials page in FastSpring:

API Credentials

New API access information. Please keep in a secure location. It will not be accessible after your next login.

Username: ZV6CMMM8T

Password: [Redacted]

APIs can be accessed via api.fastspring.com using basic authentication. [Read more about FastSpring API.](#)

Username
ZV6CMMM8T

Password
No longer available.

[Reset Credentials](#)






Copy the files to your server

In the local folder on your computer where you unpacked the FS Subscription kit, you will find a folder named "**xlspadlock-fskit**".

Upload the entire contents of the "**xlspadlock-fskit**" folder to your web server, for instance with a FTP software. It can be in the root folder of your website, but it can be somewhere else too.

You can then rename the folder to something else if you want, e.g. "**subscription**".

Open the "subscription" folder and you should see:

Name	
	inc
	index.php
	LICENSE
	setupkey.php
	web.config

- If you are on Windows IIS, delete the unnecessary .htaccess file.
- If you are on Apache, delete the unnecessary web.config file.

Base URL for activation

- Please ensure the **inc** subfolder is not web accessible (you should get a 403 forbidden error if you try to access it with a web browser): it contains sensitive data and should be protected by the shipped .htaccess file (on Apache) or the web.config file (on Windows IIS).

Write down the public URL that allows access to the “**xlspadlock-fskit**” folder because we will use it later.

In our case, since we renamed the “**xlspadlock-fskit**” to “**subscription**”, it should be:

```
https://www.mywebsite.com/subscription
```

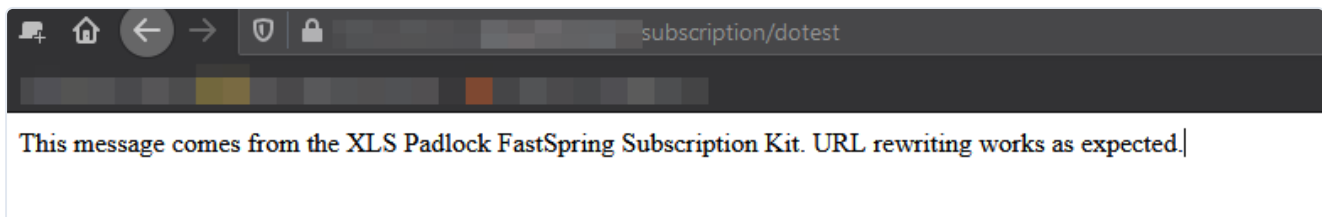
if you access your website at <https://www.mywebsite.com>

- Now, we will test whether the URL rewriting works on your web server. Please open your web browser to visit the following URL:

```
https://www.mywebsite.com/subscription/dotest
```

Replace <https://www.mywebsite.com> by your own website URL.

You must see the following message:



If not, this means that URL rewriting is not working as expected and the subscription kit will fail. Contact your webhost support to ask for help in order to enable URL rewriting.

Note for Apache users: some servers require you to specify the `RewriteBase` directive in the .htaccess file. In such cases, it should be the path (relative to the document root) containing this .htaccess file.

Set up local encryption key

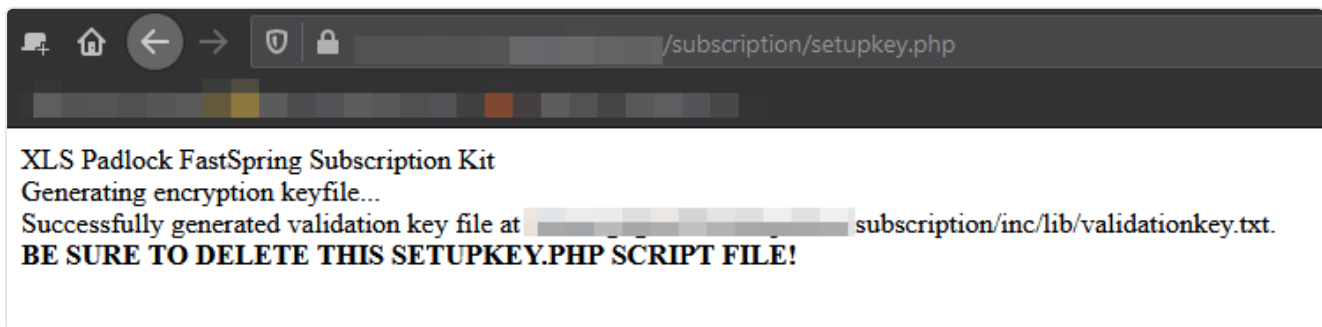
Open your Web browser and navigate to the [URL defined previously](#) + setupkey.php

With the example above, we would go to:

```
https://www.mywebsite.com/subscription/setupkey.php
```

This PHP script will set up the encryption key used by the web application to exchange with the workbook EXE.

After the execution of the PHP script, your web browser should show:

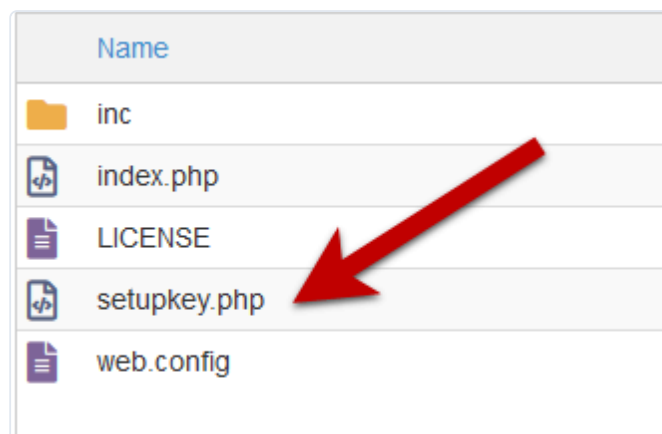


This encryption key is stored in a file at the location:

```
/subscription/inc/lib/validationkey.txt
```

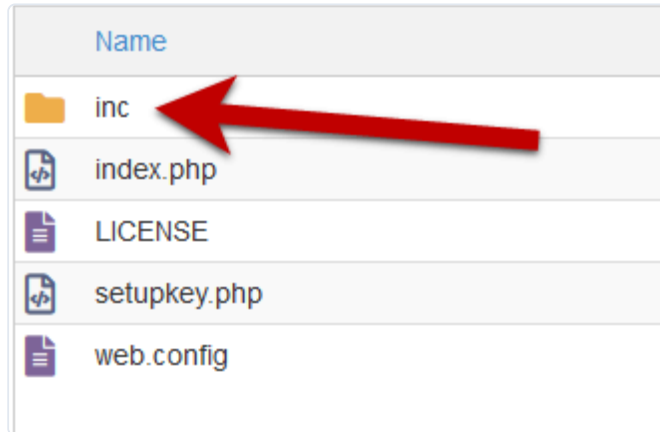
Once you are in production (i.e. you deployed your workbook EXE file made with XLS Padlock to customers), do not replace this file, otherwise end users will have to reactivate their workbook.

Finally, for security purpose, remove the setupkey.php file from your web server.



Step 3: configure config.ini

1. Navigate to the "inc" subfolder and edit the **config.ini** file stored on your server.



Once again, check that the config.ini file cannot be accessed publicly (the .htaccess prevents end users from accessing it) because this file contains sensitive data for generating activation keys.

The important part of the config.ini file looks like this:

```
[globals]

; ===== Modify the following parameters for your workbook =====

; ** Your XLS Padlock user ID: paste your activation code after the xps- **
xlspadlockuserid = "xps-xxxxxxxxxxxxx"

; ** Default maximum number of activations per order allowed (we also take account of order quantity)
; For instance, if the customer bought a quantity of 2 products and with defmaxactivperorder = 2
defmaxactivperorder = 2

; ** Your FastSpring API Username - see https://fastspring.com/docs/fastspring-api/ "Access the API"
fsapi_username = "xxxxxxxxxxxxx"

; ** Your FastSpring API Password - see https://fastspring.com/docs/fastspring-api/ "Access the API"
fsapi_password = "xxxxxxxxxxxxx"

; =====
; Do not modify below
DEBUG=0
UI=./inc/app/views/
AUTLOAD=./inc/app/controllers/|./inc/app/models/|./inc/lib/
```

2. Change the value of the entry named **xlspadlockuserid** to your XLS Padlock user ID. You can find this user ID on your [My Account](#) page, where it is shown with a **Copy** button. **Important: remember that the user ID begins with xps-**
3. Finally, provide the [API username and password](#) you got from FastSpring at step 1.

```
fsapi_username = "ABCDEF12345"
```

```
fsapi_password = "54DEF321ABC"
```

4. Save modifications to the **config.ini** file.

The web application is now ready to receive data from the compiled workbook EXE files and communicate with your website.

Step 4: associate your compiled EXE files

The FS Subscription kit was designed to support multiple Excel workbooks at once. So, you must install the kit only once on your server even to manage multiple workbooks.

All the parameters of your Excel workbooks must be configured in a file called **workbooks.json** in JSON format.

You will find a template of the file in the "**inc**" directory of the application. We will see how to configure it in the following steps.

IMPORTANT

Be careful, your file must respect the JSON format, otherwise it will not be loaded correctly by the application. You can test the validity of your file using online tools such as <https://jsonlint.com/>

1. Navigate to the "**inc**" subfolder and edit the **workbooks.json** file stored on your server.

Once again, check that the workbooks.json file cannot be accessed publicly (the .htaccess prevents end users from accessing it) because this file contains sensitive data for generating activation keys!

2. Here is the content of the workbooks.json file:

```
{
  "products": {
    "product-path": {
      "title": "Your workbook 1 title",
      "xlspadlocksignkey": "Your workbook 1 base64 Ed25519 secret key - 2026 protocol",
      "xlspadlockprivatekey": "{Your workbook 1 security GUID - legacy pre-2026}",
      "xlspadlockmasterkey": "Your workbook 1 master key",
      "usehardwarelocking": 1,
      "maxactivperorder": 2,
      "keymaxdays": 180,
      "shownagscreen": 0
    },
    "just-demo": {
      "title": "Just a demo, remove me in production",
      "xlspadlocksignkey": "",
      "xlspadlockprivatekey": "{6363CDED-4E14-412A-8196-5A52C356D6CD}",
      "xlspadlockmasterkey": "14JFGDBFG784GKLGJSJSG121QSFB",
      "usehardwarelocking": 1,
      "maxactivperorder": 2,
      "shownagscreen": 0
    }
  }
}
```

IMPORTANT

xlspadlocksignkey is the base64 Ed25519 secret key for the **2026 signed protocol** (recommended). **xlspadlockprivatekey** is the legacy security GUID, used only for workbooks still packed in pre-2026 compatibility mode. Fill the field that matches how each workbook was packed; both may coexist across products. See [The 2026 activation protocol](#) for details.

“products” is a mandatory section. Do not change the value. The schema used is the following:

```
{
  "products": {
    "product-path": {
      ...
    }
  }
}
```

If not already done, go to the [FastSpring dashboard](#) and create the subscription product that will be associated to your workbook. If you do not know how to do that, please see the documentation at <https://fastspring.com/docs/subscriptions-overview/>

3. Choose Products then Subscriptions. The product path will be displayed. On the screenshot below, it would be marbook-demo:

The screenshot shows the FastSpring dashboard with a sidebar on the left containing navigation items: Dashboard, Storefronts, Products, Bundles, Subscriptions (highlighted), Coupons, Sales, Reports, Integrations, and Settings. The main content area is titled 'Subscriptions' and displays a table with the following columns: Icon, Path, Display, and Price. The table contains one entry with the path 'markbook-demo', the display name 'Markbook Demo', and a price of '\$0.00 USD'. A red box highlights the 'Path' column header and the 'markbook-demo' value. Below the table, there is a 'Show 100 entries' dropdown and a 'Showing 1 to 1 of 1 entries' indicator.

4. In the workbooks.json file, replace "product-path" with the product path defined in the FastSpring Dashboard. In our case above, we would write "markbook-demo":

```
{
  "products": {
    "markbook-demo": {
      ...
    }
  }
}
```

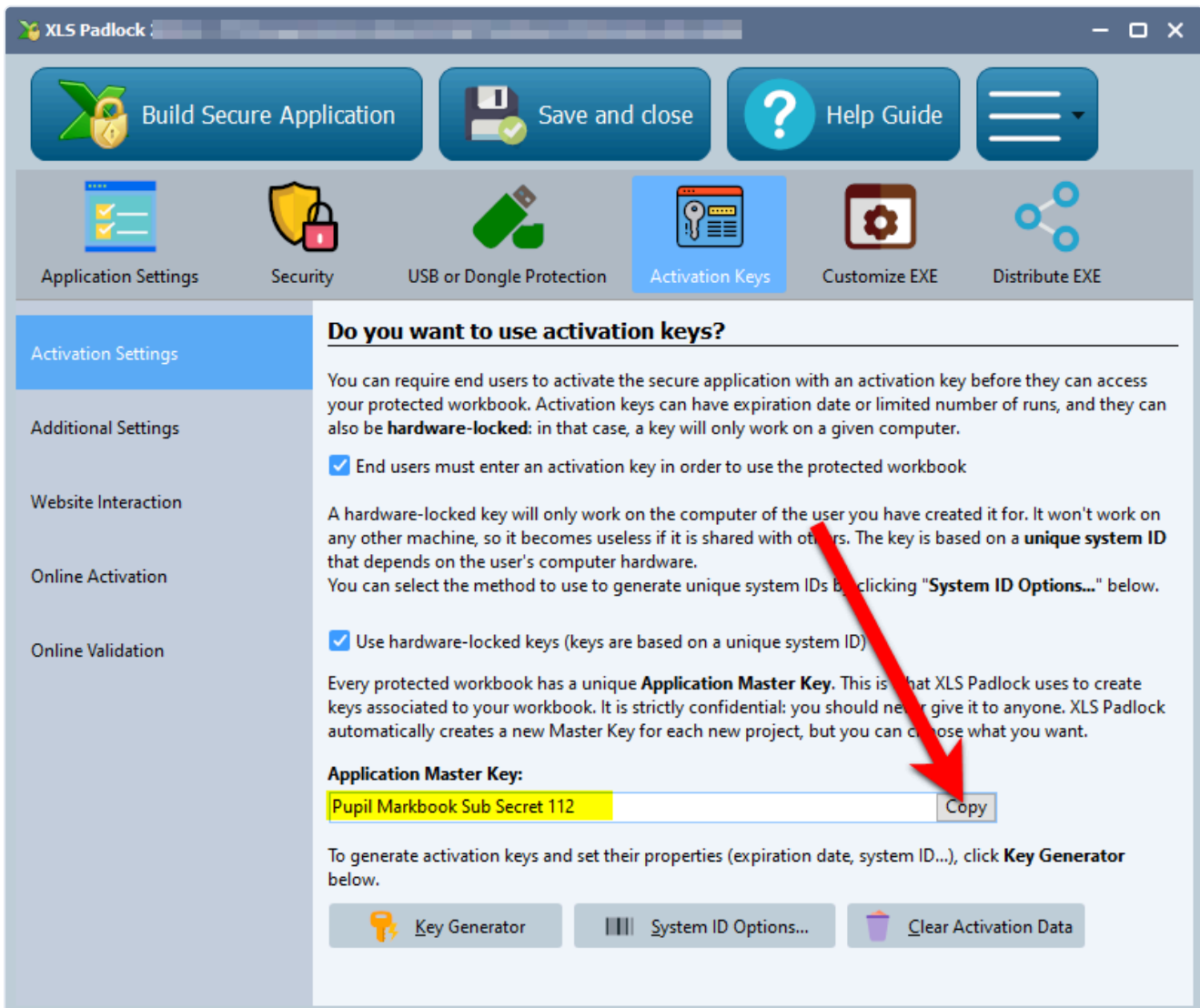
5. You can then give the title you want to your workbook. This is purely informative and can be useful to help you navigate when configuring multiple workbooks:

```
{
  "products": {
    "markbook-demo": {
      "title": "My workbook title",

```

6. Start Excel, open your Excel workbook and XLS Padlock.

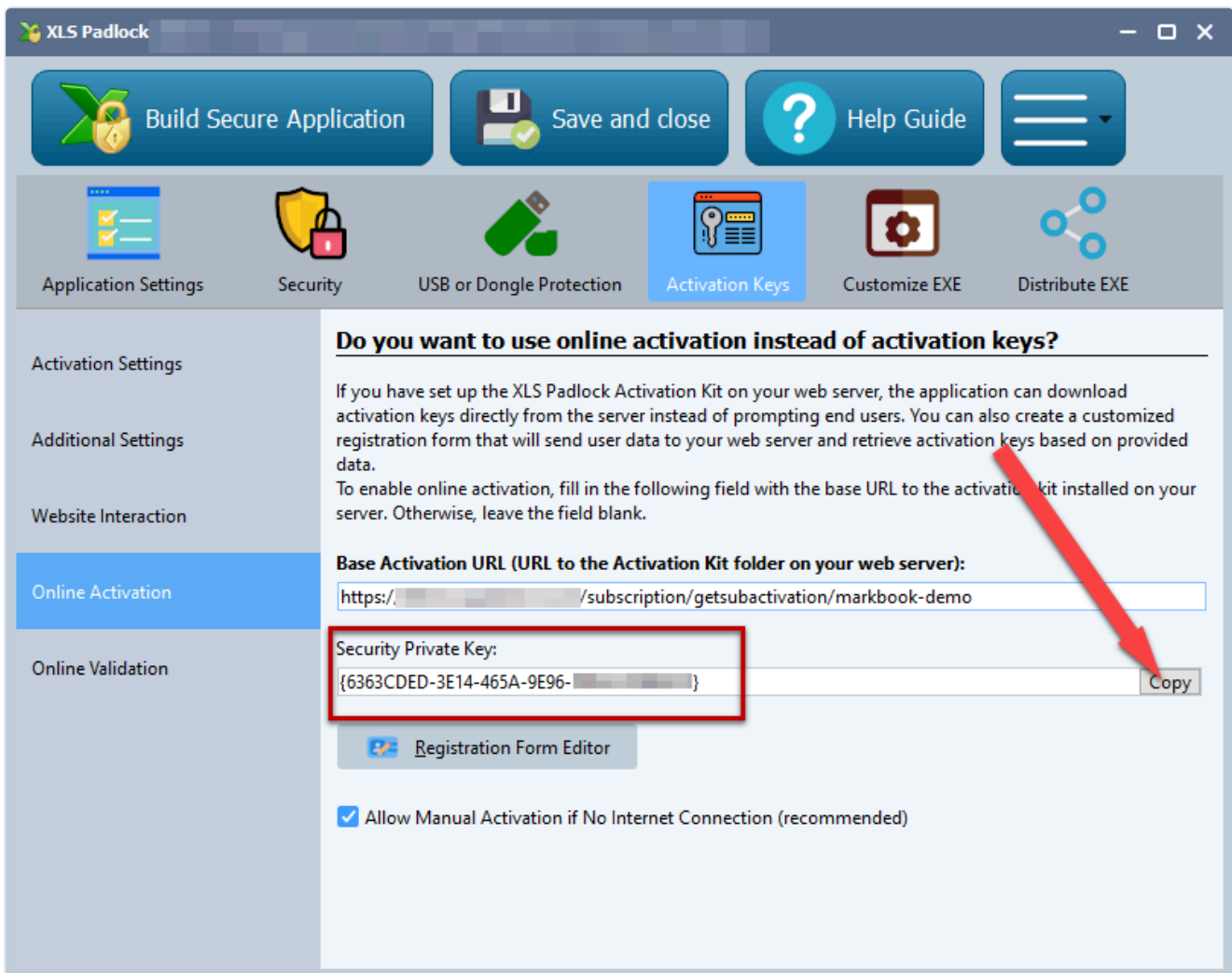
Navigate to the “**Activation Keys / Activation Settings**” page. Click the “**Copy**” button near the “**Application Master Key**” field:



Paste this into workbooks.json for the value of the **xlspadlockmasterkey** entry. Based on the screenshot above, this would give:

```
{
  "products": {
    "markbook-demo": {
      "title": "My workbook title",
      "xlspadlockmasterkey": "Pupil Markbook Sub Secret 112",
      ...
    }
  }
}
```

7. Back to XLS Padlock, choose **Online Activation** and set up the signing key for this product. With the **2026 signed protocol** (recommended), leave *"Compatibility mode for pre-2026 activation kits"* **unchecked**, click **"Generate keypair..."**, and copy the displayed **private (secret) key** into the **xlspadlocksignkey** entry. See [The 2026 activation protocol](#) for the full procedure.



Based on the screenshot above, this would give:

```
{
  "products": {
    "markbook-demo": {
      "title": "My workbook title",
      "xlspadlocksignkey": "VGhpcyBpcyBhIHNhbXBsZSBiYXNlNjQgRWQyNTUxOSBzZWNyZXQ=",
      "xlspadlockmasterkey": "Pupil Markbook Sub Secret 112",

```

TIP

Legacy (pre-2026) workbooks: if the workbook is still packed with *"Compatibility mode for pre-2026 activation kits"* checked, click the **"Copy"** button near the **"Security Private Key"** field instead and paste it into the **xlspadlockprivatekey** entry (for example `"{6363CDED-3E14-465A-9E96-5B52C356F6CD}"`). In that case, leave **xlspadlocksignkey** empty for this product.

...

8. Now we can configure the different properties for that variation:

- If you do not want to generate hardware-locked activation keys (NOT RECOMMENDED), change the **usehardwarelocking** entry from 1 to 0.
- Define the number of activations per order allowed thanks to the **maxactivperorder** entry. This lets you define on how many machines an end user (for instance who purchased your compiled workbook EXE) can activate the workbook. By default, it's the value defined in the config.ini (see above).

Note: the order quantity is also taken in account. For instance, if the customer bought a quantity of 2 products and with `maxactivperorder = 2`, we would allow 4 activations.

1. If you want to generate activation keys that would display a nag screen (useful for trials),
2. Finally, if you want to set an expiration date or maximum number of runs / days, it's possible:
 1. For a maximum number of runs, define the entry named `"**keymaxruns**"` and set its value.
 2. For a maximum number of days, define the entry named `"**keymaxdays**"` and set its value.
 3. For a fixed expiration date, define the entry named `"**keyexpiredate**"` and set its value.

```
{
  "products": {
    "markbook-demo": {
      "title": "Your workbook title",
      "xlspadlocksignkey": "VGhpcyBpcyBhIHNhbXBsZSBiYXNlNjQgRWQyNTUxOSBzZWNyZXQ=",
      "xlspadlockmasterkey": "Pupil Markbook Sub Secret 112",
      "usehardwarelocking": 1,
      "maxactivperorder": 2,
      "keymaxdays": 180,
      "shownagscreen": 0
    },
    ...

```

Step 5: configure the Excel workbook

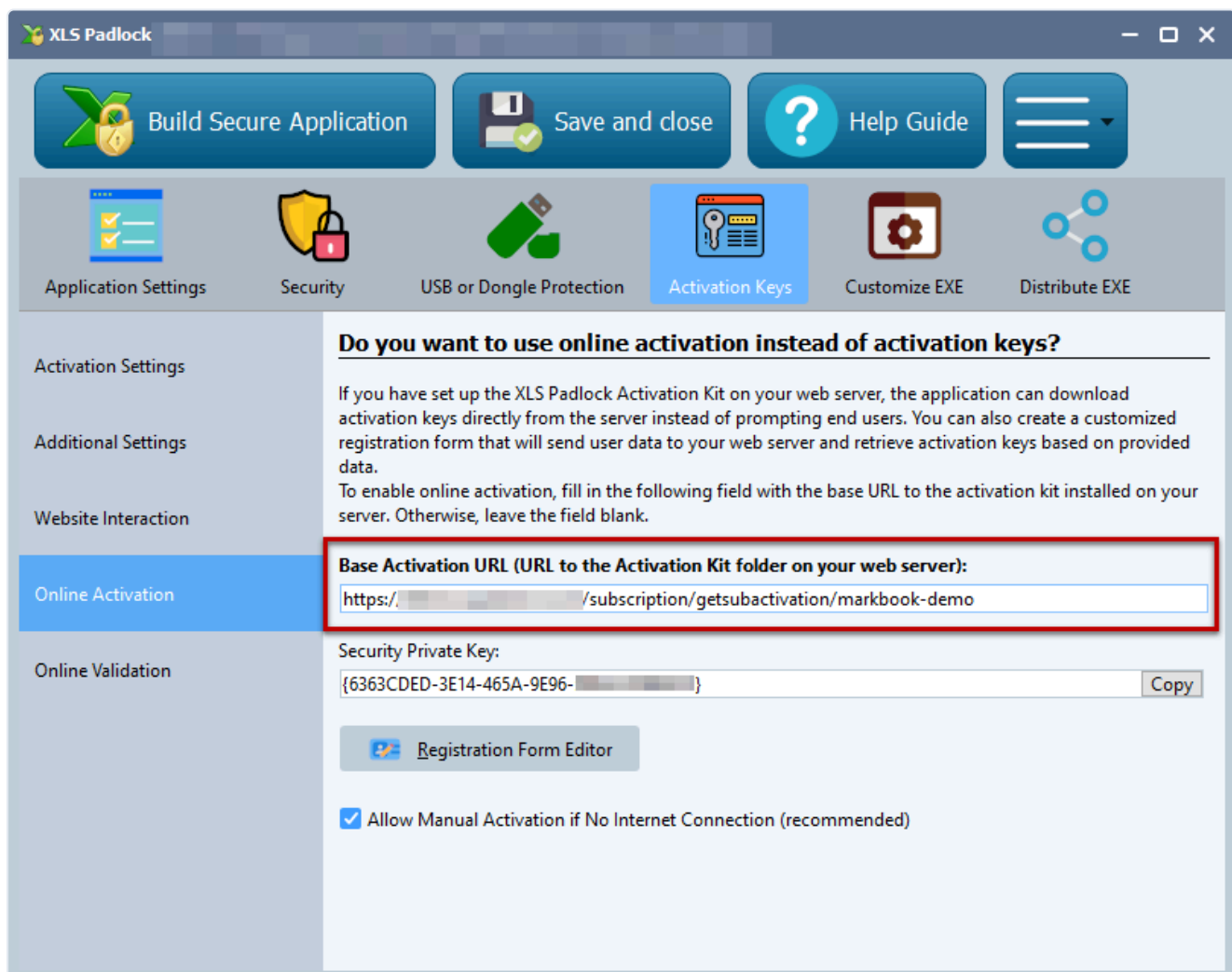
1. In your XLS Padlock project, navigate to the “**Activation Keys / Online Activation**” page.

In the **Base Activation URL** field, enter the base URL as defined previously (see [Base URL for activation](#)) on your web server followed by `/getsubactivation/{product-path}` (a final slash `/` is not mandatory) and replace `{product-path}` with the [product path associated to your workbook \(and defined in workbooks.json\)](#).

In our [case started earlier](#), it would be:

```
https://www.mywebsite.com/subscription/getsubactivation/markbook-demo
```

If the **product path is omitted**, the first product defined in `workbooks.json` will be used.



The screenshot shows the XLS Padlock application window. The top menu bar includes 'Build Secure Application', 'Save and close', 'Help Guide', and a dropdown menu. Below the menu bar are six icons representing different settings: Application Settings, Security, USB or Dongle Protection, Activation Keys (selected), Customize EXE, and Distribute EXE. The main content area is titled 'Do you want to use online activation instead of activation keys?'. It contains a paragraph explaining online activation and a text input field for the 'Base Activation URL (URL to the Activation Kit folder on your web server)'. The URL entered is 'https://www.mywebsite.com/subscription/getsubactivation/markbook-demo'. Below this field is a 'Security Private Key' field containing a hexadecimal string and a 'Copy' button. There is also a 'Registration Form Editor' button and a checked checkbox for 'Allow Manual Activation if No Internet Connection (recommended)'.

XLS Padlock can handle TLS/SSL connections: if your web server has a valid SSL certificate, you can use secure URLs that begin with **HTTPS**.

TIP

On this same **Online Activation** page, set up the **2026 signed protocol** for this workbook: leave *"Compatibility mode for pre-2026 activation kits"* unchecked and click **"Generate keypair..."** (the matching secret key goes into the product's **xlspadlocksignkey** in workbooks.json). See [The 2026 activation protocol](#). Leave compatibility mode checked only if you must keep the legacy pre-2026 protocol.

- Click **Registration Form Editor**. XLS Padlock shows a basic HTML editor and a preview of the dialog's text. You can define your own HTML text but at least an HTML field named **token is required**.

IMPORTANT

To identify the subscription of your customer, the web application expects the compiled workbook EXE to send a unique order identifier called token. For your customers, it's an activation code but internally we will name it the "token".

For instance, we can use the following HTML code for the registration form editor:

```
<FONT size="10"><B>Activation Required</B></FONT><br><br>
Welcome to this sample application made with Excel and XLS Padlock. <A
href="https://demo.xlspadlock.com">Learn more about this application</A><br><br>To access this
the activation code that you received after your order and press <B>Activate</B>. If your compu
choose <B>Manual Activation</B>.<br><br>
Your Activation Code:<br><CONTROL TYPE="EDIT" WIDTH="280" VALUE="" ID="token">
```

Only this part is mandatory because it defines the HTML field that lets the user enter his activation token:

```
<CONTROL TYPE="EDIT" WIDTH="280" VALUE="" ID="token">
```

Save your changes and close the editor.

- Compile your workbook EXE application. It is now associated to the web application and ready for testing!

Step 6: FastSpring generates tokens

When customers purchase your subscription from FastSpring, they need to be sent [an activation code or token](#).

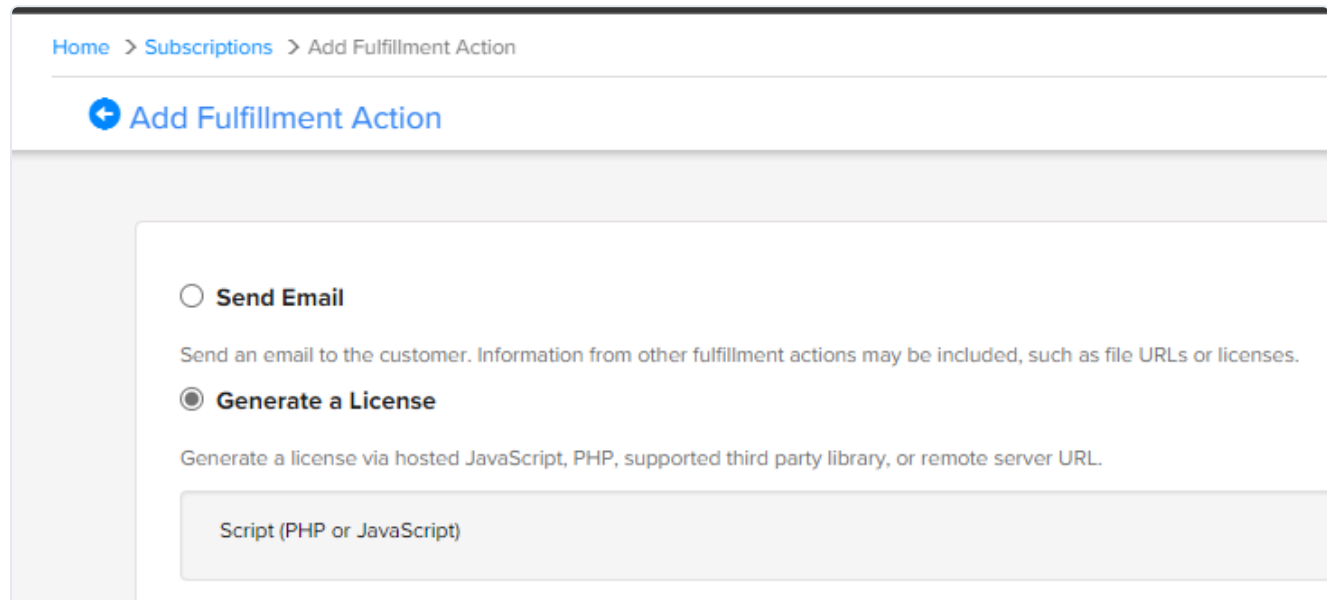
We will then configure FastSpring to automatically generate this activation code and send it to the customer by email. This token lets him activate the workbook.

Generate the activation code

In FastSpring dashboard, select **Catalog / Subscriptions** then edit the subscription [associated to the workbook](#).

In **Fulfillment**, click **Add New Fulfillment**.

Choose Generate a License then Script (PHP), click Next:



Home > Subscriptions > Add Fulfillment Action

Add Fulfillment Action

Send Email

Send an email to the customer. Information from other fulfillment actions may be included, such as file URLs or licenses.

Generate a License

Generate a license via hosted JavaScript, PHP, supported third party library, or remote server URL.

Script (PHP or JavaScript)

Configure all fields like on this screenshot and click Create.

General

Output Format
Single-Line License (Quantity Based)
The type of license format the system should expect from the script.

License Name
Email Address
Configures the content of the name variable.

Script Type
PHP

In PHP Script Source, copy and paste the following PHP code:

```
<?php
$ascii = $subscription;
$hex = '';
for ($i = 0; $i < strlen($ascii); $i++) {
    $byte = strtoupper(dechex(ord($ascii[$i])));
    $byte = str_repeat('0', 2 - strlen($byte)).$byte;
    $hex*=$byte;
}
$res = wordwrap($hex, 4, '-', true);
print $res;
?>
```

Click Test to verify the code and Save to save your changes.

The activation token is based on the subscription ID internally used by FastSpring.

Send the email with activation code

After purchase, FasSpring sends a receipt message that automatically includes relevant fulfillment details, including the activation code generated as described above.

There is no additional step to configure.

Activation process

To determine the number of allowed activations for your compiled workbook EXE, the web application stores custom data into FastSpring orders thanks to the [Tags feature](#).

When a customer purchases a **subscription for your compiled workbook EXE** through FastSpring, an initial order is generated and appears in the Orders list:

The screenshot shows the 'Subscription' page in the FastSpring web application. The 'Overview' section displays the subscription status as 'Trial' and includes a table with one product: 'Markbook Demo' (markbook-demo) with a quantity of 1 and a pricing of 1 month. The 'Charges' section shows a table with columns for Billing Entry, Status, Amount, and Period. A red box highlights the 'Order' column, which contains the value '-6023-91111'.

IMPORTANT

We expect each subscription to have an initial order where to store activation data. The initial order's reference does not end with "B".

Activation and validation processes **for a subscription** managed by the web application use the **activation token** that identifies the subscription in FastSpring.

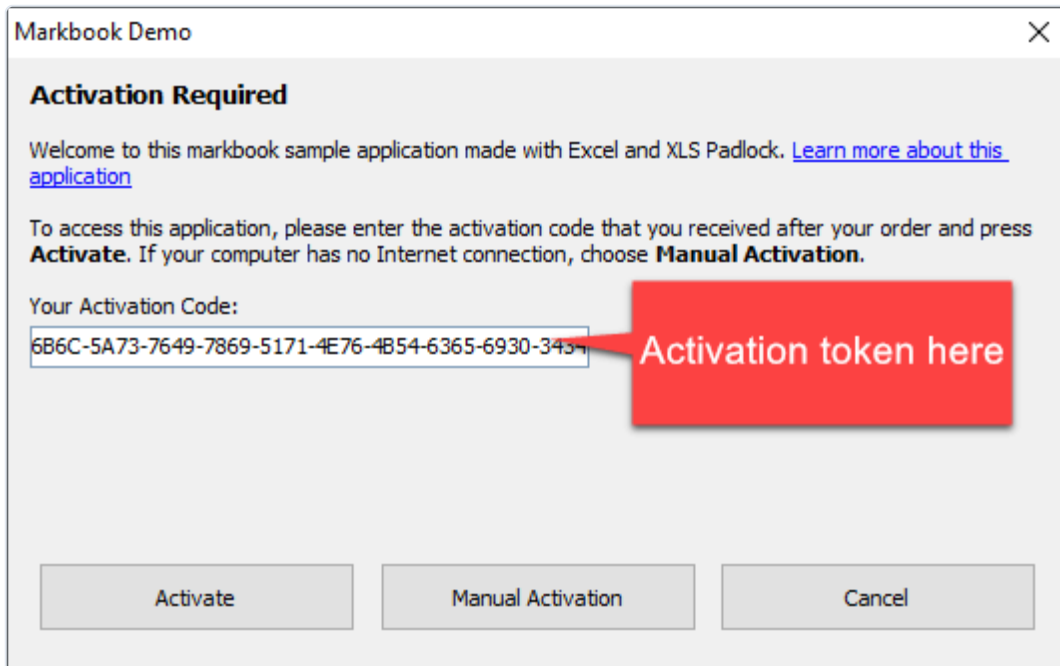
IMPORTANT

All activation tokens are [automatically generated by FastSpring](#) based on the subscription ID.

This activation token must be sent to the customer who purchased your workbook. This token lets him activate the workbook. By default, FastSpring will send the activation token automatically.

When customers run the compiled workbook EXE file, a dialog box appears telling them that an activation is required. As said before, the dialog box must at least ask for the activation token (you can name it what

you want but the associated HTML field ID must be “token”, see [configuring the Excel workbook for subscriptions](#)).



Markbook Demo [X]

Activation Required

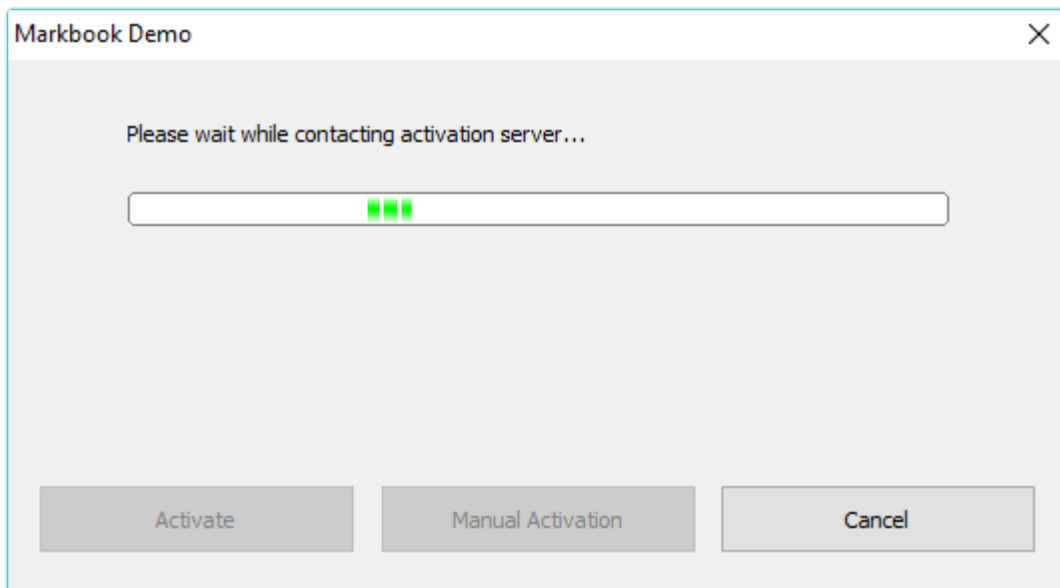
Welcome to this markbook sample application made with Excel and XLS Padlock. [Learn more about this application](#)

To access this application, please enter the activation code that you received after your order and press **Activate**. If your computer has no Internet connection, choose **Manual Activation**.

Your Activation Code:

 Activation token here

When the customer clicks Activate, data is sent to the activation server:



Markbook Demo [X]

Please wait while contacting activation server...

Progress bar: [|||||]

Buttons: Activate, Manual Activation, Cancel

The FS kit on the activation server will check the subscription’s status and different settings.

IMPORTANT

If the subscription status is different than “Active”, activation will be refused.

This ensures that only paid customers with an active subscription can activate your workbook.

After a successful activation, a confirmation message is shown, and the compiled workbook EXE is restarted. If an error occurs, the corresponding message box is shown, and customer can try to activate again.

Validation process

Suppose that your customers want to get a refund after purchasing or cancel their subscription, you can now block their access to your workbook. This is possible thanks to the [validation feature of XLS Padlock](#) handled by the FS Subscription kit: you can configure your compiled workbook EXE to **check the validity of the customer's subscription regularly**.

TIP

This feature is only available if online activation is also used.

Possible uses:

- you sell Excel workbooks and you want to block access to them if end users ask for refunds.
- you want to control who can access Excel workbooks regularly.

To activate the validation feature, fill in the base validation URL field.

The screenshot shows the XLS Padlock application settings window. The 'Online Validation' section is active, displaying the following configuration options:

- Do you want to check the validity of activation with online validation?** (Text area for explanation)
- Base Validation URL (URL to the Activation Kit folder on your web server):**
- Validate the activation state:**
- If the activation cannot be validated:**
- Display this error message if validation fails:**
- Always skip validation if no Internet connection is available (not recommended)

In the **Base Validation URL** field, enter the base URL as defined previously (see [Base URL for activation](#)) on your web server **followed by /dosubvalidation/{product path}** (a final slash / is not mandatory) and

replace **{product path}** with the FastSpring product path associated to your workbook (and defined in workbooks.json).

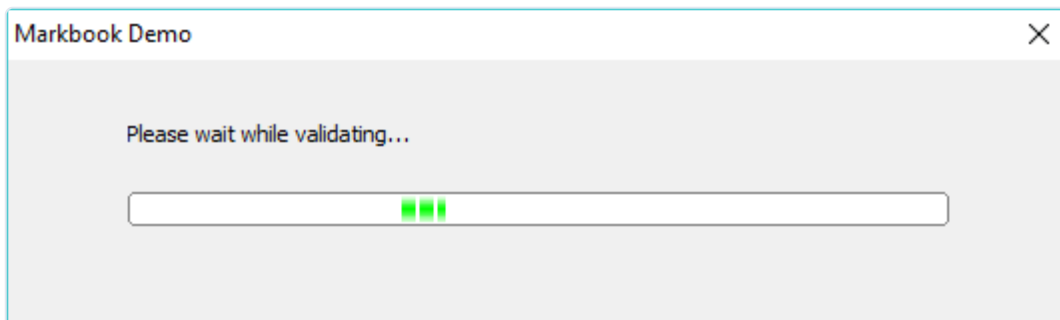
In our case, it would be:

```
https://www.mywebsite.com/subscription/dosubvalidation/markbook-demo
```

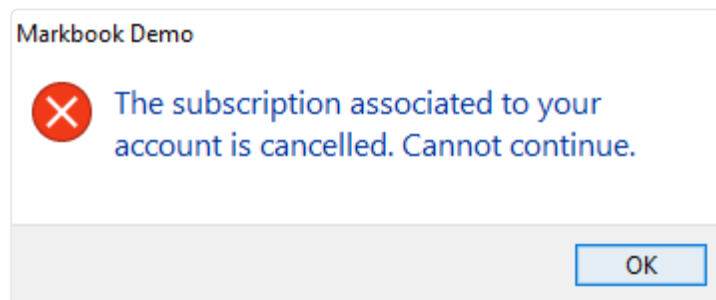
Then, define the frequency of validation and what should happen if the validation fails. Please refer to the [XLS Padlock User Guide](#) for further details about each setting.

Recompile your workbook EXE with XLS Padlock.

The compiled workbook EXE can now perform validation at startup:



Suppose that you blocked the access of your customers (by cancelling their subscription) or if the subscription expired, they will get this error (returned by the web application):



Otherwise, if validation is successful, the compiled workbook EXE continues its execution.

During validation, the FS kit also checks the subscription's status.

IMPORTANT

If the subscription status is different than "Active", validation will be refused.

This ensures that only paying customers with active subscriptions are validated, and therefore, may access the workbook.

Setting up deactivation

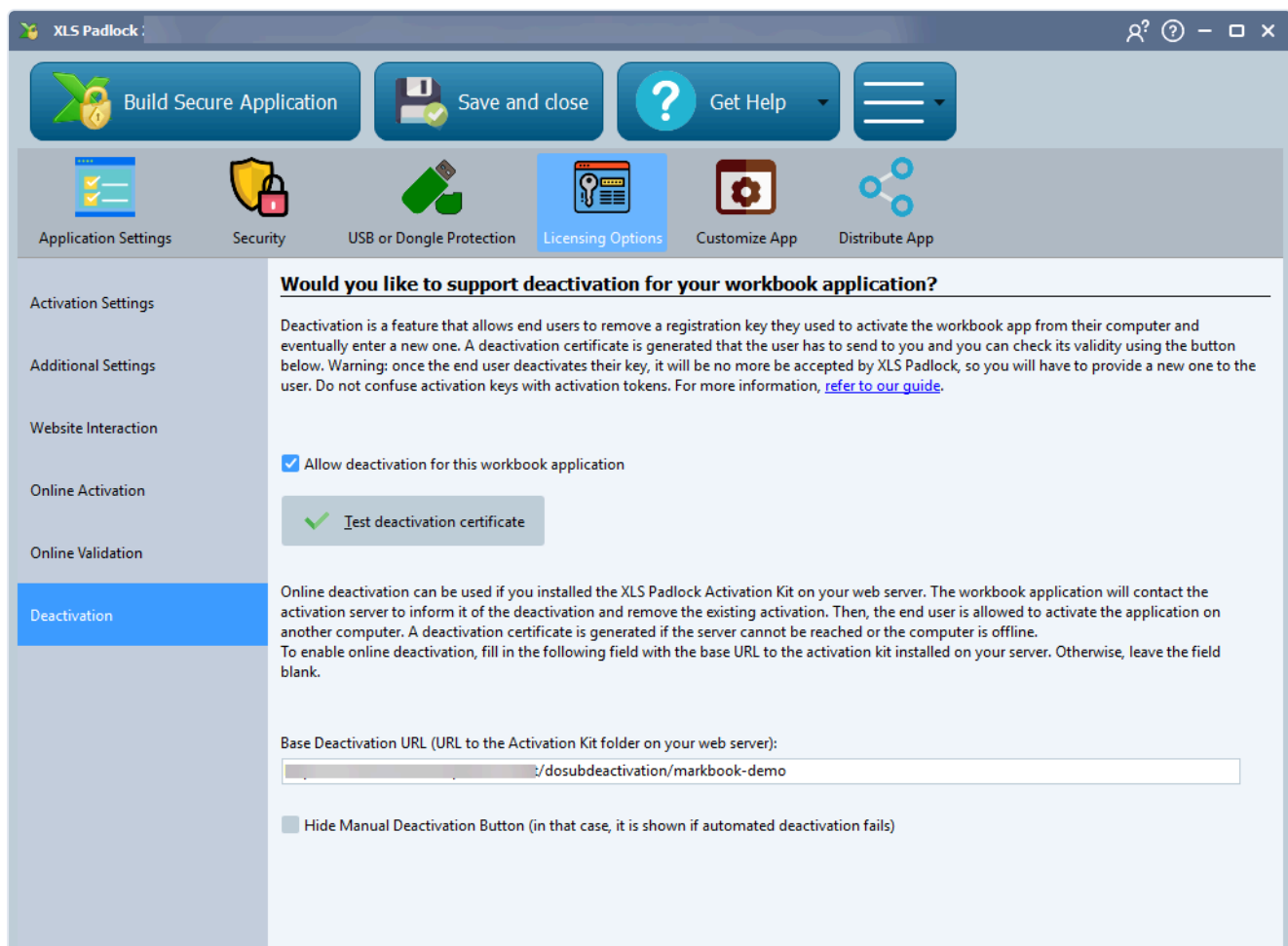
The deactivation process in XLS Padlock allows end users to unregister their activated Excel workbook apps from their current device, enabling them to transfer their license to another device. This process is useful in scenarios like hardware changes, system upgrades, or when switching to a new computer.

The FastSpring Subscription Kit manages the online deactivation process efficiently. When a user decides to deactivate a license on their device, the process is automated, streamlining the workflow for both users and administrators. No need to check deactivation certificates manually.

TIP

This feature is only available if online activation is also used.

To enable the deactivation feature, tick the "Allow deactivation for this workbook application" option and fill in the Base Deactivation URL field:



The screenshot shows the XLS Padlock application interface. The top navigation bar includes buttons for "Build Secure Application", "Save and close", "Get Help", and a menu icon. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with icons for "Application Settings", "Security", "USB or Dongle Protection", "Licensing Options" (which is highlighted), "Customize App", and "Distribute App".

The main content area is titled "Would you like to support deactivation for your workbook application?". It contains the following text: "Deactivation is a feature that allows end users to remove a registration key they used to activate the workbook app from their computer and eventually enter a new one. A deactivation certificate is generated that the user has to send to you and you can check its validity using the button below. Warning: once the end user deactivates their key, it will be no more be accepted by XLS Padlock, so you will have to provide a new one to the user. Do not confuse activation keys with activation tokens. For more information, [refer to our guide](#)."

There is a checked checkbox labeled "Allow deactivation for this workbook application". Below it is a button with a green checkmark and the text "Test deactivation certificate".

The "Deactivation" section in the left sidebar is highlighted. The main content area explains: "Online deactivation can be used if you installed the XLS Padlock Activation Kit on your web server. The workbook application will contact the activation server to inform it of the deactivation and remove the existing activation. Then, the end user is allowed to activate the application on another computer. A deactivation certificate is generated if the server cannot be reached or the computer is offline. To enable online deactivation, fill in the following field with the base URL to the activation kit installed on your server. Otherwise, leave the field blank."

Below this text is a text input field labeled "Base Deactivation URL (URL to the Activation Kit folder on your web server):" with the value "http://localhost:8080/dosubdeactivation/markbook-demo".

At the bottom, there is a checkbox labeled "Hide Manual Deactivation Button (in that case, it is shown if automated deactivation fails)".

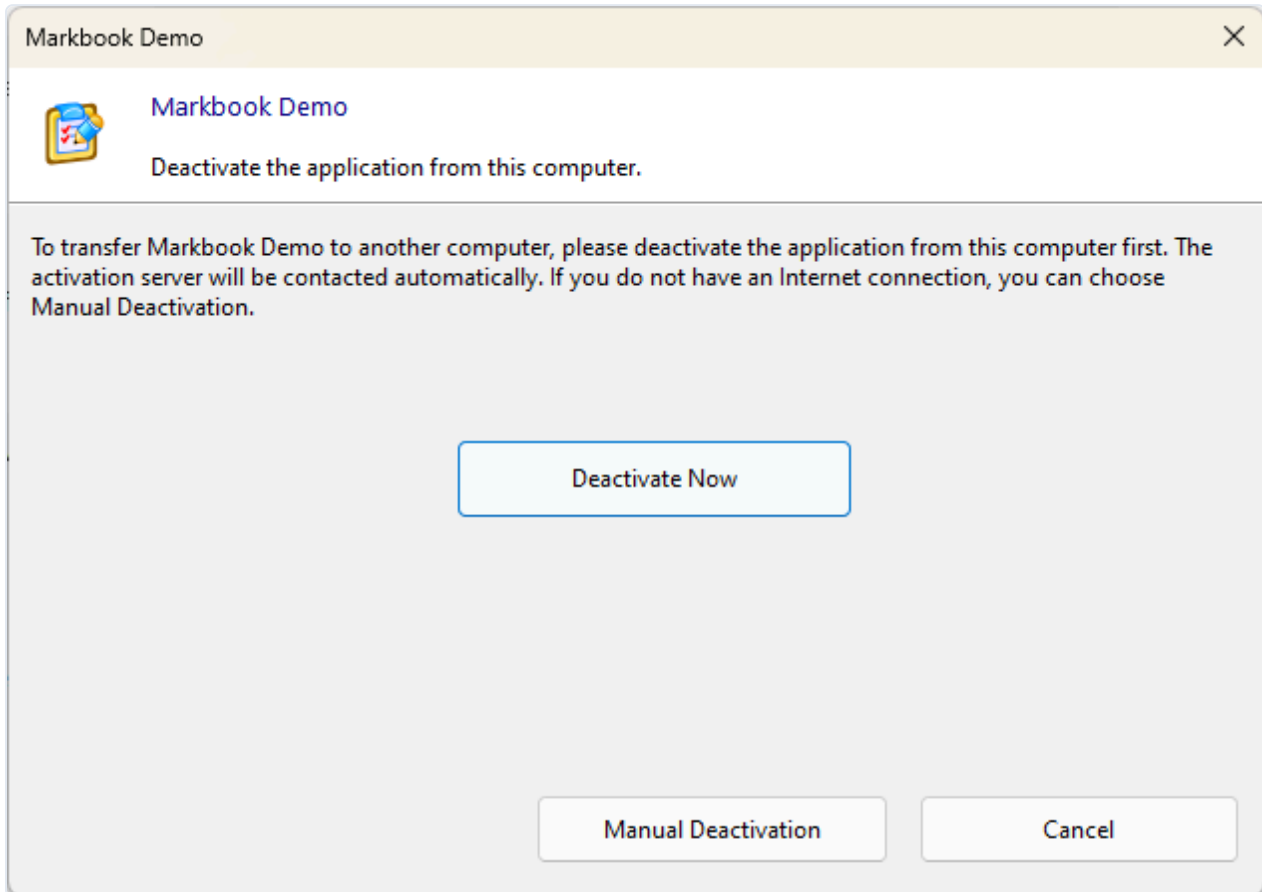
In the Base Deactivation URL field, enter the base URL as defined previously (see [Base URL for activation](#)) on your web server, followed by `/dosubdeactivation/{product path}` (a final slash is not mandatory) and replace `{product path}` with the FastSpring product path associated to your workbook (and defined in `workbooks.json`).

In our case, it would be:

```
https://www.mywebsite.com/subscription/dosubdeactivation/markbook-demo
```

Recompile your workbook EXE with XLS Padlock. That's all.

When end users want to deactivate (see the XLS Padlock user guide for instructions on how to deactivate a workbook app), the server will be informed and the existing activation stored on it will be removed.



During deactivation, the FastSpring Subscription Kit also checks the subscription's status.

IMPORTANT

If the subscription status is different than "Active", deactivation will be refused.

This ensures that only customers with an active subscription can deactivate existing licenses in order to transfer them.