PsychStim Requirements

A PsychStim program is broken down hierarchically.

- Program/trial: The top level is the individual PsychStim program, which is run once per trial.
  - Subject information: The program first displays a dialog that collects basic information on the subject, including subject ID, gender, and age. Other information can be added to this, but that requires customization.
  - Intro text: The program itself has an introductory text that explains the purpose of the experiment and gives general instructions.
  - Sequence: A program is made up of a number of sequences, arranged in a particular order.
    - Intro Text: Each sequence has (optional) introductory text that explains its purpose and gives instructions.
    - Randomization: Each sequence can have its individual stimuli's order randomized.
    - Display Progress: The program can optionally display the number of sets completed within the current sequence, and the total number to be completed.
    - Set: A sequence is made up of a number of sets, either arranged in order or randomized.
      - Stimulus: A set is made up of a number of stimuli, arranged in a particular order
      - Pause after set: There can optionally be a pause in the stimulus presentation after each set, with the subject required to press the spacebar to continue.
        - Stimulus type: A stimulus can be text, audio, video, or image.
        - Responses: A stimulus can have between 0 and 4 responses that the subject will be shown after the stimulus is presented.
        - Response keys: The keys corresponding to each response can be customized (though there are common keys used)
        - Correct response: If one response is correct, and accuracy coding is desired, the correct response can be encoded in the stimulus.
        - Stimulus during response: The stimulus can optionally be shown while the response is displayed.
        - Stimulus data: The name of the file containing the stimulus, or, if text, the text to be displayed.
        - Timings: The timings of each part of the presentation of the stimulus and, optionally, the subject's response can be customized.
    - Concluding text: Each sequence has (optional) concluding text that can tell the subject the next steps
  - Concluding text: The program as a whole has (optional) concluding text that can be used to debrief the subject

If what you want to do can fit within this framework, then the program can usually be provided within the same day the stimuli are provided. More complicated setups will take more time, but unless modifications to the underlying program code are required (ie, unless it strays beyond what can is described above), it shouldn't take more than a day. This can be reduced if I am given lists (electronically, either in email or a text file) of the specific groups of stimuli that you wish to make into sets, and thence into sequences. (This is most important when something more complex than "put all the stimuli in one group and run through them randomly one or more times" is desired)

Modifications to the base program code are also possible: for instance, Powell and Nash's Attention-Interpretation program from 2011-2012 was a modification of PsychStim. These take longer, with how much longer obviously heavily dependent on just how significant a modification is desired.

Timothy Collett