

Simple Survival Kit for Template Upgrades

Don Reynolds
President
World-Wide Consulting Group
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Simple Survival Kit... Overview

- Templates drive applications generator
- What do templates contain
- Types of Template Sets
- Template registry
- Adding your own code
- Why templates change

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Simple Survival Kit... Overview Cont.

- Benefits
- Gotchas
- Managing the change process
- Some tools to help
- Prerequisites
- Is it worth the time?
- Paradigm Shifts

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Templates drive Application Generator

- Dictionary Interface (Optional)
- At Design Time
- Compile Time

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Dictionary Interface (Optional)

- Standard Options
 - File, Field, Key, Relations
- User Options
 - File, Field, Key, Relations

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At design time

- Program logic flow
- Screen layouts
- Report layouts
- Special processing
- Windows behavior
- Embed code

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Compile time

- Source code generation
- Compiling source code into .obj
- Linking into EXE, DLL, LIBs

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What do templates contain?

- Template language statements
 - #Template
 - #Program
 - #Procedure
 - #Code
 - #Where
 - ...
- Check the Programmer's Guide

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What do templates contain cont.

- Target language statements
 - Usually Clarion
 - Data
 - Dictionary files
 - Data (global, module, local)
 - Procedural code
- Check the Language Reference Manual

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Types of Template Sets

- Clarion (from TopSpeed)
- Third Party (Check your catalog)
- Custom (in house)

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Template Registry

- In order to use a template it must be registered
- Many sets can be registered at one time
- The entire set is available to each program unless limited by the template designer

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Adding your own code...

- At predefined embed points
- Using template-created variables

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Why templates change

- To fix bugs
- To add functionality
- Paradigm shift

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Benefits

- Consistent code generation
 - You don't have to code most of the program
 - Each procedure is 'coded' in similar way
- Faster development time
- Fewer errors
- More time for design, solving problems

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Benefits

- But nothing in life is free



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Gotchas

- Template generated variables can change
- Embed points can disappear
- Embed points can move
- New reserved words can be added

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Less dangerous results...

- Compile errors

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Very dangerous results...

- No compile errors
- Behavior changes

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Managing the change process...

- Identify embed points used
 - in one system
 - in all systems
- Create Benchmark system
 - Using all embed points
 - Create and archive source files

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Managing the change process...

- When new template set is released
 - Regenerate benchmark system version 2
 - Note system generated variable name changes
- Compare Version 1 source with Version 2
 - Using all embed points
 - Create and archive source files
 - Determine if differences change functionality

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Some tools to help

- Identifying unique embed points for system
- Unique embed points for all systems
- Benchmark application
- Comparing source files

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Prerequisites

- Basic understanding of Clarion Language
- Someone to ask when you find something you don't understand
 - Team TopSpeed
 - Colleagues, CompuServe @, Internet
 - User Groups
 - Conferences

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Prerequisites

- Discipline
- Time

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Is it worth the time?

- Depends on some of the following
 - How well your customers like surprises
 - How accurate you want to estimate
 - How well you like interruptions
 - What kind of quality you desire in your work.
 - Current work load and deadlines

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Is it worth the time?

- Goal is to eliminate nasty surprises
- Surprises seem to increase in cost exponentially the further along in the development process you are.

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Paradigm Shifts

- Start over with benchmark 1 for new paradigm
- Start with benchmark application
 - Modified as needed

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- Summary
- Questions

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